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THE NEW REPUBLIC

RECRIMINATIONS!

Why voters don't like Democrats *William Schneider* • The passing of the passé *Sidney Blumenthal* • Reagan's second act *David Gergen* • The Jews fail Reagan *TRB* • Bad ideas and good ones *The Editors*

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION?

To the editors:

H.H. sounded surprised to discover that there are people who actually believe in Armageddon ("Washington Diarist," TNR, November 12). But anyone who has lived in Independent Baptist country knows that a lot of folks out here believe it with all their heart and soul. Not to worry. They are not as dangerous as they seem.

Those devil liberals, you see, have finally managed to push fundamentalists over the edge to the point where they have said, as it were, "to hell with theology." Until about eight years ago, their dispensational pre-millennialism—which teaches that the world will grow progressively more evil until the reign of the Antichrist begins, at which point the Church will be "raptured" off to meet Christ in the air, an event which will be followed by three and a half years of satanic rule on earth, and *then* Armageddon—kept them out of politics. They figured that if the world was getting more evil, then it was according to prophecy and could not be altered. Now, though Jerry Falwell, Tim LaHaye, and others give a lot of lip service to the idea that ours is the last generation, they no longer act as if they believe it. They now think that they can "save America"—and in doing so, put off the scheduled end of the world and return of Christ.

This points to two reasons why the Falwells of America are not going to give Ronald Reagan the O.K. to blow up the world: first, Armageddon, which they think might involve a limited nuclear war, cannot happen until the True Church has been removed from the Earth. But they are still here. As long as they are, we are all safe. Of course, if we wake up one morning to discover that Mr. Falwell's TV show has been canceled. . . .

Second, deep down they don't see any connection between what they believe and what they do. H.H. does not hope in vain when he hopes that the President "regards 'philosophy' as something wholly unconnected with any other area of life." I once asked Lamarr Mooneyham, then president of the North Carolina Moral Majority and now a national M.M. field director, whether he saw any contradiction between his rapturistic pre-millennialism and his political activity. He just looked at me blankly and said, "What has one got to do with the other?"

So have no fear. The loonies are not about to blow up the asylum—at least not while they are still behind bars.

REV. DAVID S. FISCHLER
Battleboro, North Carolina

DEFENDING MEESE

To the editors:

TRB laments that "the American press suddenly seems to be losing its appetite for scandal ("Queasiness About Sleaziness," TNR, November 19). Among the examples he cites is the media's reaction to the report of Independent Counsel Jacob A. Stein, which exonerated our client Edwin Meese III. TRB attempts to whet the media's lost appetite for still another feast at Mr. Meese's expense, but winds up showing why he dines alone.

TRB dismisses the results of Mr. Stein's investigation on the ground that Mr. Stein is a criminal defense lawyer and "[t]he fact that a man who spends most of his days dreaming up reasons why people aren't guilty saw nothing in the Meese case worth an indictment doesn't mean the charges were 'baseless.' " These are the facts: four of Mr. Stein's five deputies were former federal prosecutors (including a former assistant special prosecutor during Watergate), and all five were united in the report's conclusion that there was "no basis" to bring charges against Mr. Meese.

One could just as easily say that these experienced prosecutors spent their professional lives dreaming up reasons why people should be indicted and the fact that they came up with no grounds to justify any charges against Mr. Meese makes that outcome all the more persuasive.

But the main vice of TRB's type of analysis is that it asks the press to challenge the findings of an impartial and comprehensive federal investigation on the ground that the independent counsel—who has a well-earned reputation for integrity and professionalism—is a criminal defense lawyer. Any journalist can challenge the results of any investigation on this ground. Which is precisely why the American public is sated with Watergate-style journalism in general and attacks on Mr. Meese's reputation in particular.

E. ROBERT WALLACH
LEONARD GARMENT
Washington, D.C.

TRB replies:

Any journalist can indeed challenge the results of any independent counsel's investigation. I'm sorry if this is inconvenient. In fact, I don't challenge the decision not to indict Mr. Meese. I challenge the presumption that this must be the last word. Mr. Stein's report did not conclude that there was "no basis" for all the charges against Mr. Meese. It concluded that, on balance, none were worth prosecuting. This is a more subjective matter. More important, criminal conduct is not the only question. Mr. Stein quite specifically refused to pass judgment on the larger ethical questions. Now Mr. Meese's supporters want to treat his report as a total vindication. It isn't.

ON THE RECORD

To the editors:

I can't agree with Jeffrey Record's claim ("Reagan's Strategy Gap," TNR, October 29) that since the 1950 Inchon invasion in Korea the United States has not had a significant military success. The withdrawal from the Yalu was not a negative reflection on American military skill. The withdrawal was a successful operation which preserved the American forces and demonstrated considerable military ability. The retaking of South Korea after the Chinese onslaught was certainly a success. The 1957 Lebanon incursion and the 1962 blockade of Cuba were other successes. Mr. Record should realize that the 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco which he blames on the military was a C.I.A. affair; no servicemen participated.

The reforms of the Joint Chiefs which Mr. Record favors have been defeated because Congress considered them incompatible with civilian supremacy over the military. One of these reforms, for example, would have allowed the chairman of the J.C.S. to issue commands to U.S. forces without civilian supervision.

JOSEPH FORBES
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUE 3,646

DECEMBER 3, 1984

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COVER drawing by Taylor Jones for THE NEW REPUBLIC.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 191, No. 23, Issue 3,646, December 3, 1984. (Printed on November 14, 1984.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 9 & 16, July 16 & 23, Aug. 13 & 20, and Sept. 17 & 24, 1984) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $48; foreign, $73; Canada, $60. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1984 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, NY 11737-0001.** For subscription problems call **800-645-9559** (In N.Y. State call 800-732-9119).

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FROM WASHINGTON

STILL CHOSEN

Jews live like WASPs, the saying goes, and vote like Puerto Ricans. A nice surprise of the election was that this remains true. Walter Mondale got over two-thirds of the Jewish vote. That's more than among any other identifiable group except blacks and the unemployed.

In fact, more Jews voted for Mondale this year than for Jimmy Carter and John Anderson combined in 1980. President Reagan, who scored 8 percent better than last time among the general population, scored 7 percent worse among Jews. A conservative trend beginning in 1972 was reversed. To the frustration of the Republican Party, and of some self-consciously tough-minded Jewish intellectuals, the most affluent ethnic group in America continues to vote its values instead of its interests.

The Reagan people spent $2 million chasing after Jewish votes. They hired professional telephone salespeople (most, it seems, black or Hispanic) to call Jews, identify themselves as "Harry Goodman" or "Betty Goodman," and urge support for Reagan. They sent the candidate into the heart of Jewish Long Island wearing a red, white, and blue yarmulke. In the election's silliest cat-and-mouse game, they plotted to photograph Mondale embracing Jesse Jackson, while Mondale plotted to avoid being caught *in flagrante delicto*. All to no avail.

What is it with Jews, anyway? It's several things. Like other late-arriving ethnics, American Jews got their Democratic politics early on, in the slums and sweatshops. But unlike other ethnics, Jews rarely change their politics with their economic status. That's because (and I generalize grossly—but I'm entitled) Jews are slower to forget. Every Passover, Jews remind themselves that "we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt." The Nazi Holocaust is still a living memory for many. So Jews get regular inoculations against complacency about their own present good fortune, and frequent opportunities for empathy with others who don't share it. Jews also, based on religious belief and historical experience, take it as both a moral duty and a sensible precaution to hold themselves to a higher standard. Although it annoys Jewish hard-liners and anti-Semites alike, mainstream American Jews traditionally have felt they can't behave like any other selfish interest group. They must be like Caesar's wife.

The one subject on which Jewish voters are unabashedly selfish is Israel. Democrats have a longer and more glorious history of supporting the Zionist cause, but some people feel Israel is better served by the greater Republican passion for military strength. Two years ago Reagan was in trouble with supporters of Israel because of his sale of AWAC planes to Saudi Arabia, his stupid attempt to make pals with Syria, and what some saw as an unjustified lack of enthusiasm for the invasion of Lebanon. But the Administration spent a busy two years making amends on the Middle East front. The experts think that in terms of Jewish votes in the election, the Israel issue was a wash.

But the Republicans had great hopes on other fronts. A mass conversion of the Jews seemed imminent. You could detect four styles of apostasy. First, *assimilationist*: affluent Jews who, two or three generations off the boat, finally started thinking and voting like other Americans of their class. Second, *intellectual*: the predominantly Jewish neoconservative movement. Neoconservatives have challenged the liberal orthodoxy on a variety of matters, but are especially vehement about affirmative action, which threatens Jewish opportunities for places in medical school, tenured university slots, and so on.

Third, *traditional*: lower-class, urban, non-assimilated Jews reacting to changing neighborhoods and rising crime rates. And fourth, *libertarian*: the heavy representation of Jewish students, dizzy with Friedman and von Hayek, in campus conservative groups. Libertarianism has a natural appeal for computer jocks, lab mice, and other brainy and self-sufficient Jewish kids.

Yet these rivulets of reaction never rolled into a torrent. Two men made the difference: Walter Mondale and Jerry Falwell. The pollster William Schneider points out that Mondale, compared to George McGovern and Jimmy Carter, is "the exact kind of Democrat Jews feel comfortable with." Mondale's operatives prevented a resolution against anti-Semitism from coming to a vote at the Democratic Convention, for fear that Jesse Jackson's black supporters would be offended.This was Mondale at his worst, pandering wildly and sacrificing his principles to the petty machinations of his staff.

But Jewish voters saw through this to Mondale at his best, the heir to Hubert Humphrey, a *mentsch*, which Ronald Reagan is not. By contrast, the world of the Dallas Republican Convention—a world of "greedheads, barbie dolls, and fundamentalist Ayatollahs," as a NEW REPUBLIC editorial nicely put it ("The Reform Petard," September 10)—did not look inviting. Jews peered into the abyss and pulled back.

Writing in *Commentary* a few months before the election, Irving Kristol, the leading neoconservative, deplored this kind of sentimental thinking. Jews, he argued, must get pragmatic. Gritty realism is where it's at, my boys. "This real world is rife with conflict and savagery. It is a world in which liberalism is very much on the defensive, in which public opinion runs in the grooves established by power, in which people back winners not losers. . . ." This advice he applied both to America's dealings in the world and to Jews' dealings in the American political system. Interests matter more than values. Idealism is childish. Stop acting like some kind of chosen people.

In particular, Kristol said, it was time for Jews to cut a deal with Falwell and friends. What does it matter, he asked, what else Falwell may believe, "as against the mundane fact that this same preacher is vigorously pro-Israel?" But in the end, Jewish voters decided that the specter of Jerry Falwell, and the vision of a Christian America that the Republicans seemed to endorse, frightened them more than the specter of Jesse Jackson.

Was this naïve? I don't think so. What ought to disturb Jews about the culture and platform of Reaganism is not just the religion issue, but the general celebration of conformity, complacency, and social intolerance.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
DECEMBER 3, 1984

BAD IDEAS AND GOOD

The Wall Street Journal reports that Senator Gary Hart is contemplating "establishment of a 'policy institute' to churn out 'new ideas.' " Oh, Gary, please don't. After the 1980 debacle, you'll recall, Walter Mondale ostentatiously hied himself off to cook up "new ideas." Who can name one now? Novelty is not the best measure of an idea. What the Democrats need is not so much new ideas as new courage to evaluate ideas based on the party's true principles, rather than habit and the demands of interest groups.

In fact, the best way to start the rethinking the Democrats need to do is by sweeping away a few old ideas. What follows are half-a-dozen current Democratic causes we think can be disposed of, along with half-a-dozen causes the party might wish to embrace. Hearing a few leading Democrats take up these specific matters, some quite small, would impress us more than any number of visionary speeches or fat volumes from liberal think tanks or promises of imminent ideological Götterdämmerung.

As we hope these suggestions demonstrate, "rethinking" need not mean "repositioning" the party to the right. Every Democratic voice heard since the election jabbers eagerly about "strength" and "growth" and "opportunity." Of *course* the Democratic Party should stand for these things, but it also must stand for things that are uniquely its own. Me-too-ism is not a recipe for electoral success.

Pending the arrival of the latest batch of new ideas, then, here are some old ones the party would be better off without.

Domestic content. The 1984 Democratic platform calls it "a sound principle of international trade" that foreign automakers be required to make cars in the United States if they wish to sell them here. Of course this is the very negation of international trade. In essence, a "domestic content" law would ban foreign cars. Protectionism is a sure-fire recipe for economic decline. The cost to consumers in higher prices, to other workers in lost job opportunities, and to the economy in lost efficiency, is invariably higher than the benefit to the industry being protected. Robert Crandall of the Brookings Institution calculates that the current "voluntary" quotas on Japanese imports cost nearly $160,000 for every job they save. Domestic content would be worse. The average auto worker makes more money than the average auto buyer. A welfare program to preserve this arrangement is nonsense.

Comparable worth. Equal pay for equal work is a straightforward principle, easily enforceable by law. Equal pay for work of comparable worth is a superficially appealing idea that would create nightmares of regulation and litigation, and put the government in the business of deciding what every job in America is "worth." You don't have to be an unthinking worshiper of the free market to shudder at this prospect. From a progressive point of view, why should the government be enforcing hierarchies of compensation, declaring that someone's education makes her "worth" more than someone else's brute strength? Greater opportunities for women in all occupations are already raising the price traditional employers of women must pay to retain their services. Breaking up rigid hierarchies that distort the market (between doctor and nurse, executive and secretary) is a better way to hasten the pace than inventing new hierarchies to enforce.

The nuclear freeze. This cause did not emerge from earlier Democratic "rethinking." It was a popular enthusiasm seized upon by politicians who know perfectly well it is a silly gimmick. Short of total nuclear disarmament—an impossibility—the size of the nuclear weapons pile held by each superpower doesn't matter much. What increases or decreases our peril is the way those weapons are deployed: land or sea or air, near to or far from their targets, vulnerable to attack or relatively invulnerable, one or several warheads to a missile. The arrangements that make us safer are ones that reduce the chance of a successful first strike and increase the certainty of a successful retaliation for both sides. A "freeze" in the nuclear arms race would address none of these matters and thus would make us not one whit safer, even if the Russians went along. Right-wing propaganda to the contrary, it would not endanger us either. But it is a false banner for a party that wishes to be taken seriously about arms control.

Election campaign reform. The whole post-Watergate elec-

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tion reform has backfired on liberals and good-government aficionados. It hasn't succeeded in reducing the role of money in politics. Instead, it has ushered in the era of the PACs. The ironic result of low individual political contribution limits is that the money in politics is now almost exclusively corrupting, if not corrupt. Lobbyists and PAC directors—people motivated generally by a narrow and self-interested legislative agenda—are now the only people who can provide enough money to make a politician's head turn. The odd idealistic rich person is now out of the picture. And the PAC agendas are overwhelmingly conservative. Tighten the rules again? No dike-plugging operation can keep up with smart lawyers drilling new leaks in the system. It takes courage to admit that an experiment has failed. Except for the tough disclosure rules—the best safeguard against corruption—the reforms should be scrapped. For an alternative suggestion, see below.

Quotas. After a tussle, the 1984 Democratic platform avoided endorsing or condemning quotas and instead endorsed "goals, timetables, and other verifiable measures . . . in hiring, training, promotions, contract procurement, education, and the administration of all federal programs." No one is fooled. By whatever name, the government policies this passage refers to enshrine reverse discrimination in much of American life. "Equal opportunity" is a problematic ideal in many ways, but the cavalier overriding of it through government-enforced reverse discrimination has poisoned the racial atmosphere and not served justice. Is it equality or insanity to require businesses to anoint a few "minority" millionaires—and that is what it amounts to—in order to get a television license or federal construction contract? What do charades like this do for people who really need help? What penalty do successful blacks pay for the widespread perception that they only made it through government-imposed favoritism? Enough.

Bilingual education. "Bilingual education enables children to achieve full competence in the English language and the academic success necessary to their full participation in the life of our nation," goes an unsupported assertion in the Democratic platform. "We reject the Reagan double-talk on bilingual education and commit ourselves to expanding and increasing its effectiveness." *¡Ya basta!*

And now for some good ideas for Democrats to start chewing on:

Tax reform. This used to be a Democratic cause. Jimmy Carter used it to great effect in 1976. Remember? Now the Republicans are about to steal it, probably as a way to disguise the necessary tax increase. (They'll say the increased revenues are from "growth.") In fact, reform *is* the best way to raise new revenues. What people long for is simpler rules, lower tax *rates*, and the assurance that nobody is escaping their fair share of the burden. But the Republican tax reform is sure to be skewed in favor of the rich. The best tax reform now on the table is the one proposed by Senator Bill Bradley and Representative Richard Gephardt. It's also the best "idea" already sitting there waiting for the Democrats to pick it up and run with it.

Worker ownership and control. Here is a progressive idea that will help make American capitalism work better by giving employees a vested interest in the success of their companies. One basic pattern was set by the recent Eastern Airlines settlement, in which workers traded wage concessions for equity and power sharing. People Express, where employees get no management role but are getting rich on company stock and run an exceedingly cheery airline as a result, is another model. Don't panic, we're not talking expropriation. But there are a variety of federal policies that could go beyond the Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) currently promoted by the tax law to encourage these trends. Present federal pension regulations actually forbid employee pension funds from acquiring a controlling interest in the employer firm.

A United Nations of the democracies. A world body composed only of nations that share our most important values might be a more effective forum for addressing some of the international concerns now being ignored or parodied in the glass house by the East River. The promise of membership in such a prestigious club, and the threat of expulsion, might even become effective incentives for democratic behavior by countries on the brink. The first issue a "democratic U.N." might usefully address would be a treaty to fight terrorism. A common, and not always unjust, complaint about the Democratic Party is that it has become isolationist. If the "liberal internationalism" that the Scoop Jackson wing of the party claims to long for is to be distinguished from the foreign policy of President Reagan, it must include cooperative elements like this, and not just a military buildup and concomitant snarling.

Make the Japanese finance their own defense. They can rearm, or we'll be happy to send them a bill. About $50 billion might cover it. That would bring their contribution for their defense somewhere near our contribution for their defense (as a share of gross national product). Nearly forty years after V-J Day, they can no longer claim the rights of the vanquished. This issue should *not* be linked, as it often is, to American imports of Japanese goods. Too many Americans would rather see Japan fail the test and give us a reason to keep our markets closed. In principle, the same policy should apply to Europe. But the NATO allies are doing more of their bit (almost all have military drafts, for example), and are not quite in Japan's towering economic position.

Free television time for political candidates. Limiting campaign contributions and spending has not worked. The best hope now for making our elections cleaner and more open is to reduce the amount they cost. Federal election campaigns cost about half a billion dollars this year and half of that, a quarter of a billion, went to buy television time. (The escalating cost of TV is one reason for the disappearance of buttons, bumper stickers, and other democratic paraphernalia.) What's infuriating is that the television station owners who charge these fortunes get their licenses to use the airwaves free of charge from the government. This is doubly infuriating in the case of Presidential campaigns, which are federally funded, meaning that the taxpayers are being obliged to buy back their own

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airwaves at exorbitant prices. Most other democracies allocate television time for political messages during campaign seasons. We should, too.

Nuclear non-proliferation. Politicians of both parties make the right noises about this issue, but neither has ever given it the prominence it deserves. The biggest real-life danger of a nuclear war is not the breakdown of deterrence between the superpowers, but a spiraling crisis triggered by the use of a nuclear bomb by a Third World country or terrorist group. The day is fast approaching when several countries with less-than-stable governments, involved in passionate local disputes, will have the bomb. For this, the nations of the West are more at fault than the Soviets. Western governments repeatedly have let hopes for economic or geopolitical advantage overcome their good sense and have sold essential nuclear materials to people who shouldn't have them. A firm stand by the United States—or, better yet, the Western democracies acting together—that no more countries will be permitted to go nuclear is an issue any Democratic candidate should be proud to run on.

NOTEBOOK

□ J. WILLIAM MEDLEY is the author of the syndicated column "Conventional Wisdom," which appears twice a week in 338 newspapers across the nation. Mr. Medley is respected throughout the entire Op-Ed industry for his ability to extract from the mass of news the precise conclusions that everyone will soon agree are the only conclusions to be drawn. His opinions may be yesterday's controversy and tomorrow's cliché, but they are today's wisdom. Mr. Medley was among the first to conclude that the Beirut bombing was "a tragedy that will nonetheless not affect President Reagan's prospects for reelection." While other columnists waxed and waned, he noted that the choice of Geraldine Ferraro as the Democratic Vice Presidential nominee was "a daring move that will energize the party but not as much as some of her supporters hope." Mr. Medley's column, "Enter the Age Issue," crystallized public attention on President Reagan's soundness of mind after the first Presidential debate just as skillfully as his column "The Return of the Great Communicator" demolished it two weeks later. Washington power breakfasters now recognize that a casual "Didja read Medley this morning?" can put them one up during the key first meeting of the day. "Willie," as he is known to his fellow panelists on PBS's "Medley & Friends," is characteristically modest about his burgeoning reputation. "Some columnists rely too much on facts. But the facts have been rendered obsolete in many regions of the country, especially the South and West," he notes shrewdly. "In our rapidly changing world, what matters are themes and how they are perceived—really, the perception of how they are perceived. I try to focus on these new realities." In case your local paper doesn't carry Mr. Medley, here's a sample from his "morning after" post-election column, "History Beckons": "President Reagan now has an opportunity to win a place in the history books. The crucial question of his second term is whether will he seek to please the ideological right, where he finds his most vocal supporters, or whether he will he continue to reach out to the broad center of America which has placed its trust—and its hopes—in him. For a man so ideologically oriented, Reagan also has a strong pragmatic streak, and it may well be this side of him that will confound his critics and soon seek an arms control agreement with the Soviets."

□ HARPER & ROW has published *Organized Crimes*, a novel by Nicholas von Hoffman. A long-standing TNR policy—designed partly to forestall conflicts of interests but mostly to avoid hard feelings—prevents us from reviewing books by Contributing Editors. But it's not against the rules to say that Mr. von Hoffman's novel, a high-spirited tale of gangsters and graduate students in 1930s Chicago as that city lurched from Prohibition to Depression, is rumored to be a good read.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The first glimpse you get of her, as she trudges resolutely up on the lecture platform, is reassuring. This solid elderly woman, dressed in no-nonsense rough-spun clothes, seems at once smaller and more human than her monumental photographs or J. Davidson's squat image of her. As she looks out over the audience and thanks us, with a quick low hoot of laughter, for 'controlling yourselves to 500,' we laugh too, in appreciative relief, and settle back in our seats to give her the once-over. This Gertrude Stein woman may not be so crazy, after all. Some of our wariness eases off. She has made a good beginning, there's no denying that." ("Gertrude Stein Comes Home," by T. S. Matthews, December 5, 1934.)

The resistance is reborn.

SOLIDARITY'S SAINT

Żoliborz

IN ŻOLIBORZ it was as if the Communist regime did not exist. As if martial law had never been. "The National Commission of Solidarity, with Lech Walesa," announced the loudspeakers from the balcony of Father Jerzy's church, and applause rolled up like thunder from the vast crowd, from the steelworkers and the nuns, from old women clutching rosaries and youngsters waving Solidarity flags, from every roof and treetop. During the Pope's visit last year, most of the banners carried spiritual messages, albeit in the unmistakable jumbly Solidarność

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lettering. Here, before the coffin of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, the banners were quite explicitly temporal: "Solidarity, Gdansk region," they said, "Solidarity, Mazovia region." "Solidarity from Nowa Huta" (the giant steelworks near Kraków); chapters of the banned, persecuted, and supposedly crushed independent trade union, assembled from all over Poland to take leave of the murdered priest.

No matter that dumpy Primate Glemp managed to avoid even mentioning Solidarity in his characteristically pedestrian homily. The other celebrants said all that was necessary, in moving prayers addressed directly to the spirit of Father Jerzy. "Jurek!" said an engineer from the Huta Warszawa steelworks, in a firm, low voice. "Jurek, do you hear how the bells of freedom ring?" And Lech Walesa: "A Poland which has such priests, which has a people capable of such self-sacrifice, faith, and solidarity, such a Poland has not perished and will not perish . . . Solidarity lives, because you died for it." At the end of the day, as a great wreath of thorns lay on the catafalque, with a ribbon from "NSZZ [Independent Self-governing Trade Unions] Solidarność," the popular beatification seemed already complete. The Polish Catholic Church has its first postwar martyr. Solidarity has a patron saint.

How on earth did it come to this, in General Jaruzelski's Poland? The murder of Father Popieluszko has no precedent in Polish history. Even in the Stalinist period, Polish policemen did not resort to the kidnapping and assassination of priests. Or if they did, no one ever learned about it. For almost as unprecedented is the demonstrative vigor with which the Jaruzelski government has exposed the assassins. A normal Communist state routinely covers up the crimes or blunders of its functionaries with lies. This is the Leninist norm. In commendable violation of Leninist norms, the Jaruzelski government quickly gave information about the kidnapping; sought, arrested, and named the three secret policemen who did the dirty work; and pushed through a quite remarkable resolution at the plenary session of the Communist Party's Central Committee. The resolution described the kidnapping as an attack on the party line of "socialist renewal"; said it "harms the process of internal stabilization, church-state relations, and Poland's international prestige"; and, while praising the Interior Ministry's "committed and selfless cadres," effectively called for a purge of those responsible. If anyone initially suspected a Polish "death squad" of frustrated secret policemen acting on their own, the government has countered this impression by arresting a colonel in the secret police department which deals with the church and "suspending" the general who heads that department.

SO WHO PUT them up to it? As after any "provocation" (a key word in Polish Communist politics), Warsaw pullulates with speculation. The two least implausible theories may be called the Machiavellian and the ultra-Machiavellian. The Machiavellian theory suggests that "hard-liners" planned this "provocation" just before the Central Committee plenum, in order to damage church-state relations and toughen up the policy—if not the personnel—of the Jaruzelski leadership. Senior functionaries at the Interior Ministry would presumably have an interest in this: the less Jaruzelski could rely on the church for keeping the peace, the more he would have to rely on them. According to this theory, the Jaruzelski government is making such a dramatic, public show of the case partly, of course, to try to defuse popular outrage, but mainly in order to purge some of its "hard-line" opponents. The removal of party control over internal security matters from the hands of Politburo "hard-liner" Miroslaw Milewski (himself a police general) gives more credence to this theory. The "hard-line provocation" has therefore backfired.

Ultra-Machiavellians retort that the "hard-liners" would not have made such a clumsy job of it, and therefore suggest that General Jaruzelski and his close associate, General Czeslaw Kiszczak, the Interior Minister, were behind it after all. Somehow they managed to set up the kidnap (perhaps just by muttering audibly, "Who will rid us of this turbulent priest?"—the Thomas à Becket effect), but all along intending to denounce and expose the culprits in order to: (a.) establish firmer political-military control over the security apparatus (it is apparently military intelligence that is conducting the investigation into the state security service); and (b.) to discredit and beat back their "hard-line" critics in the Politburo, Central Committee, and party apparatus.

These are murky waters, and all we can see is the froth on the surface—not the monsters struggling in the deep. "The future will tell . . . ," some will write, but often in such matters even the future does not tell. To this day we do not know the true history of the defection of a Polish secret police colonel in 1953, whose subsequent sensational revelations about the crimes of the security apparatus (broadcast by Radio Free Europe) led to—or gave the pretext for—a major purge and bridling of that apparatus. All we can say with confidence is that anything which affects the police and security services affects the most vital organs of a Communist state.

FOR MOST POLES, however, these internal party struggles are of secondary importance. They ignore, with contempt, the antics of "the reds"—as most young people now habitually refer to the authorities. They look, rather, for the response of the church and of the opposition. It was a rich and strange atmosphere in that crowd of perhaps a quarter of a million people at Father Jerzy's funeral. On the Tuesday night, after the evening television news announced that Father Popieluszko's body had been found in a reservoir near Wloclawek, the crowd that assembled spontaneously at the church was visibly shocked and grieving. They stood with pale, shut faces, and forgotten, folded hands. But on the bright, crisp Saturday morning, the hands were raised in the V-for-Victory sign; here, they were welcoming their latest national martyr as only the Poles know how. "Yours was the victory," intoned the celebrants, "yours shall be the victory," re-

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sponded the great congregation.

What this demonstrated, if more demonstration were needed, is that Poland has not been "normalized"—that is, returned by force to Soviet norms—and that Solidarity is still the symbolic focus of national resistance. As one historian friend commented, every time the crowd sings the old patriotic hymn, "God who protects Poland," in the version from the nineteenth-century period of Russian occupation, which appeals, "Return to us, O Lord, a free fatherland," it is a plebiscite against the government. And they sing it again and again and again.

BUT HAS Popieluszko's martyrdom given new energy and direction to the Solidarity opposition, as several Western correspondents have suggested? Certainly since the July amnesty released most of Poland's political prisoners, the opposition has been slightly adrift, for want of a clear short-term political goal. Certainly, Solidarity leaders and advisers, both underground and overground, have been galvanized by the case. Lech Walesa has declared that it should lead government and society back to the negotiating table, in the spirit of August 1980. He appears to have come to an understanding with Primate Glemp, by which Walesa will appeal publicly for calm and church leaders will privately demand concessions (including trade union pluralism?) from the government. By contrast, Andrej Gwiazda, his old rival in Gdansk, has vainly called for strikes. Opposition activists have formed a Committee in Defense of Legality (KOP) in Wroclaw, and a human rights monitoring group in Kraków—both on the lines of the pre-Solidarity Workers Defense Committee (KOR). Other Solidarity advisers wonder about a Gandhi-style mass movement of nonviolence.

The great problem for them all is to find things that the great majority of Poles, workers or farmers, can actually *do* in their everyday lives. The range of intellectual opposition is immense, expressed through countless *samizdat* publications. So is the potential support among those masses of ordinary people who turn out to sing "God who protects Poland" and raise their hands in the V-for-Victory sign. But how to convert this into practical activity, constructive opposition, during the working day? The bread-and-butter issues are certainly there: for example, a new decree that will remove the guarantee of an eight-hour working day. But if to join the new, official trade unions is "collaboration" (which most workers think it is), and if Solidarity cells in most factories are no longer strong enough to organize effective strikes, then what is to be done? Who can find lasting forms of de facto pluralism in Jaruzelski's Poland?

The one independent institution that is strong enough to create and defend such forms, if it wants to, is the Catholic Church. As I suggested in these pages ("Poland's Hope," TNR, July 18 & 25, 1983) at the time of the Pope's visit last year, the church is confused and even divided by its own extraordinary strength and by the social and political demands that are made of it. There are many, especially younger clergy, who feel, as Father Popieluszko did, that they have a spiritual and patriotic duty to sustain the de facto pluralism of Solidarity's Poland. This need not take the dramatic form of Father Jerzy's monthly "Mass for the Fatherland." In the village of Zbrosza Duża, not far from Warsaw, Father Czeslaw Sadlowski has regular lecture courses for the farmers, videotapes, and a Saturday night discotheque for the local youths—all in the crypt of his church. In Mistrzejowice, an ugly new satellite town near Nowa Huta, there is a "Catholic University for the Workers," which organizes seminars for the steelworkers. In a Dominican monastery in Poznán I saw a marvelous studio theater performance of a play about Osip Mandelstam and his persecutors. The theater group had just been prohibited from holding public performances.

At the other extreme there is Primate Glemp, who seems to have spent most of his time trying to pacify public opinion in a double act with the government press spokesman, Mr. Jerzy Urban. Without indulging in the new science of Glempology, it seems fair to conclude that the Primate does not see a great role in his church for these "turbulent priests"—let alone for their Solidarity friends. Last week he actually turned the Solidarity activists out of Father Jerzy's vicarage. (They only retreated underground to the crypt.) It can hardly be that Glemp objects to clerical political activity per se—for he himself is engaged in a continuous political game with the regime; he just will not openly endorse this kind of grass-roots social activism.

However, Glemp is not the church. He is not even the church leadership. Several of his bishops have been consistently outspoken in their support of such activities; and these bishops have good relations with the Pope. If the Pope's cycle of homilies last year was a program for the Polish clergy, Father Popieluszko's life and death is now a shining personal example. "Greater love hath no man than this. . . ." After Glemp's dull, unnecessarily placatory sermon, the white-haired senior vicar of Father Jerzy's church rose to speak. In a voice breaking with emotion, he recalled his chaplain's life and work; he pointedly thanked Pope John Paul II, "who was so pleased with Father Jerzy's work"; he offered heartfelt thanks to Lech Walesa and "all those devoted to the idea of Solidarity," and he concluded defiantly, "One priest has died, but many priests have come forward to take up and carry on this work for the glory of God and the good of the fatherland—and will always celebrate the mass for the fatherland [initiated by Father Popieluszko] on the last Sunday in the month." "You see," a leading Catholic intellectual told me, "if before there were twenty Popieluszkos in Poland, now there will be a hundred."

Perhaps this martyrdom will have a significant effect on the internal politics of the military-party-state, and on the secular opposition. But its most certain, profound, and lasting results will surely appear within the church itself.

TIMOTHY GARTON ASH

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The unmaking of the unpresident 1984.

THE PASSING OF THE PASSÉ

BY SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

WALTER MONDALE committed many errors, but his principal one was so fundamental that it can appropriately be rendered only in the form of a blunt statistic: 525 electoral votes to 13. The lopsided result could be partly attributed, of course, to Reagan's personal popularity and to economic prosperity. But Mondale was not such a cipher that he can claim no credit for his demise. The extent of his failure exceeded Reagan's planning for triumph. Mondale's campaign was an endless anticlimax, a year-long free-fall. By November 6, he had become "inevitable" for the last time.

Mondale's greatest flaw, apparent from the beginning, was that he was Mondale—that is, the quintessential establishment Democrat. What was most striking about him was how little originality he possessed. He appeared as a faithful reproduction in the picture gallery of party history; he was an original copy.

Mondale stressed that his authenticity came from the party establishment. He created a test for others—who's a "real Democrat"?—that in turn created a standard by which he would be judged. His insistence on the exclusive nature of the party and by implication the magnificence of his own status made most people into outsiders. Until his final days on the stump, the "people's Democrat" communicated the fearful condescension of a defensive elite.

Mondale saw his campaign rationale as the restoration of the New Deal coalition to power. But he was forced by repeated upsets to notice that bonds had been loosened and energy was dissipating—the definition of physical entropy. Mondale could feel that these bonds were weaker in his own relationship with the Democratic electorate. And he projected the entropy he detected within the party to society at large, viewing everything as falling apart and breaking down. He peopled this dismal vista with the heroes of the past—F.D.R., J.F.K., and Truman. By identifying himself with them, he hoped to reawaken primal memories and thereby strengthen voters' allegiance to his cause. He acted as if brandishing these symbols would restore the great days. Yet the candidate of entropy could not offer gifts great enough to make the coalition strong again. And, although he evoked the iconography, he did not explain where the initial spirit of attachment came from. Because he couldn't dramatically demonstrate how the gods had won their power, he could not be invested with it himself, no matter what his geneological claim. He portrayed himself as the curator of a tradition, a role ruling out the creative master stroke.

While the least effective element in the 1984 Democratic coalition was Mondale, the most important element in the New Deal coalition was Roosevelt. Roosevelt's power flowed from the social debts he was owed. He seemed to be a figure of almost mystical dimension because tens of millions felt that his indispensable leadership had transformed their estates and status. He gave the New Deal constituencies life and fire, gifts which could never be excelled. While mass organizations such as the industrial unions felt their very existence had required F.D.R.'s tenure, individuals felt an intensely personal connection to the President. When they heard his warm voice on the radio calling them "my friends," they could sense the Depression lifting. For the immigrant workers, being a real American meant being a real Democrat; they were included at last. The arrangements Roosevelt established were permanent, but the feeling of indebtedness was not easily transferable from generation to generation. When the New Deal was no longer new, when it became the matter-of-fact condition of daily life, the ardent loyalty of the founding period faded. It could be temporarily called from the deep by ritual, but it could not be sustained without the creation of new social debts. Thus the insurgency was calmed. Yet the bureaucratic stratum whose prestige and power had been built upon it flourished, assuming an autonomous existence of its own. The interests of labor, women, and blacks are not necessarily narrow or "special." The legitimacy of their claims and rights, however, doesn't mean that an independent establishment doesn't exist. Its center is Washington, and its purest political expression was Walter Mondale.

Mondale had a fervent institutional following, but no personal following. He was a noble functionary, a member of an aristocracy independent of the older sources of established power such as big business. He was part of an elite with its own peculiar pecking order and rights. He was a technocrat among the policy elite, an organization man among the organizational elite, a lawyer-lobbyist among the lawyer-lobbyists; he was *the* placeman of placemen. And his elevated status was due to his membership in the party elite, not his standing with the broad electorate. He had always been selected, then returned, but never simply elected. He received his rank by appointment. His re-

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nowned caution derived partly from the protective embrace of the establishment that cosseted him. This elite preserved the old deal in ossified form, excluding a new deal.

AFTER THE SHOCKS of the outsider candidacies of George McGovern and Jimmy Carter, the party insiders set about creating special privileges for themselves in the Presidential nominating process, privileges that would exempt them from the unsettling fluctuation of popular opinion. The agents of Edward Kennedy, Mondale, and the A.F.L.-C.I.O. wrote new party rules. The new rules "front-loaded" the primaries, ostensibly giving an advantage to the candidate who amassed the most formidable organizational endorsements and resources; supplanted many primaries with caucuses, again favoring the organizational choice; and revived the Congressional caucus—King Caucus—by ennobling officeholders as "super delegates," whose instincts would be partial to whichever insider candidate emerged. By forging these rules, the establishment believed it would bring back to life the world as it ought to have been, the ideal past in the present. Their distorted image of the future was based on an equally distorted reading of the past. Only eccentric interlopers, in their view, had prevented the party from its natural self-expression.

The candidate who garnered the establishment endorsement, supposedly making him best suited to run successfully according to the new scheme, was the "real Democrat." The slogan was an ideological justification for a fixed position, and Mondale used it as a rhetorical bludgeon to beat his opponent. In doing so he articulated the hauteur of the Washington establishment, an imperious claim to superior status and legitimacy. He had no realization that the capital elite's independence led to isolation, that its haughtiness and presumption led to political ineptitude.

After the recession of 1981-82, Mondale regarded Reagan as a spent force, a bankrupt ideologue. He was simply "Hoover with a smile," as Tip O'Neill put it. In approaching this familiar enemy, there was no need to rethink; the old verities would be more than sufficient. Mondale had no sense that the politics of 1982 led away from the politics of 1984, that the politics of recession led away from those of recovery. His adherence to the 1982 model, which was the 1930s model rephrased but not updated, permitted him to hold the notion that when the traditional case was stated, his faction of the party would be restored to its proper station: the White House.

The establishment that had been deposed by Reagan in 1980 was soon under assault within its own gates by Gary Hart and a new generational constituency that did not fit any of the conventional categories and could not be organizationally brokered. After initial disorientation, Mondale responded to the challenge with a relentless campaign of distortions of virtually every aspect of Hart's record. Mondale's face disappeared from his ads, replaced by instruments of fear—a blinking red telephone and a handgun aimed at the viewer. (Hart would either blow up the planet or blow your head off.) To be sure, Hart's failings undermined his own effort; the reality of Hart was less than the idea of Hart. But after New Hampshire, Mondale never offered himself as a positive alternative. His campaign was one of almost sheer negativity. He jammed Hart's message without ever engaging it. Perhaps no candidate of either party has ever run a bleaker or emptier campaign. It destroyed Mondale's favorability rating with millions of voters, including millions who later reluctantly voted for him. Reagan campaign officials were surprised to discover after the primaries that Mondale's unfavorability rating in Massachusetts, bastion of liberalism, approached an astonishing 50 percent.

In his moment of maximum crisis, Mondale fell back on one element of his coalition, the A.F.L.-C.I.O., which had fallen back on him to rescue it from its own crisis. No Democratic candidate, not even Hubert Humphrey, has been so materially indebted during the primary to one group and one interest. The labor federation's money was essential for more than field organizing. It helped finance Mondale's polling and media. Without this aid the thinness of his campaign would have been transparent, and it might have drifted away from its own lack of weight.

The traditional party was based on long-held loyalties and customs. One of these customs was that organized labor did not endorse a Presidential candidate until after the conventions of both parties. Labor, its leadership believed, would be best served by rewarding those who constantly bid for its favor. Lane Kirkland broke with this tradition. He lined up labor on the side of one candidate against others, in Hart's case a candidate with a strongly pro-labor record. Kirkland was bidding for more than the support of candidates; he was attempting to secure dominance over the party itself. Thus labor preempted the already skewed election process, which it had helped shape, subsuming the function of the party itself through the shell of the Mondale campaign, which became its dependency.

LABOR'S EARLY endorsement was an effort to arrest its general decline. In 1983, at the time of the endorsement, the unionized segment of the work force stood at about 17 percent, down from a high of about 30 percent in the early 1950s. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. had become backward and incompetent in many of its essential tasks, including basic organizing. If the federation had been a vital force of growing influence in its own right, it would not have felt the compulsion to create a de facto labor party. Its endorsement was a sign of its weakness, not strength; its entropy in the economic realm led it into the political. Mondale represented an external solution to labor's internal crisis, a way to achieve change without really changing anything. He was a shortcut back to the old deal, whose restoration would allow the A.F.L.-C.I.O. to avoid going through the pain of renewing itself.

In the past, the party appealed for the support of all citizens as an autonomous institution, perhaps serving

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some interests more than others but the captive of none. Mondale's reliance during the critical primaries on 135 delegate committees, financed mainly with millions of dollars from labor political action committees, removed his claim to traditionalism. He proposed a radical new mode of partisanship by securing the nomination through paths directly controlled by a single interest. Mondale postured as a party savior, but he undercut its Van Burenism, its independent mediating stance above all contentious interests. Are the parties merely different agglomerations of interest, competing sides of the means of production, or do they have identities of their own? When Mondale fell from grace he became the candidate of one interest over the party. His recovery then raised the question of his independence. His individuality was blurred, and he could not credibly project a strong persona.

The image his campaign finally did project was that of the Chrysler bailout. This economic imagery had a latent function, for it applied to both the Mondale campaign and the A.F.L.-C.I.O. executive board. The reason they were so aroused by the symbolism of Chrysler was that they too needed bailout.

Throughout the primary, Mondale's high command asserted that independents and moderate Republicans were peripheral to victory in November. Kirkland, especially, disdainfully dismissed Hart for his appeal to them. These voters weren't "real Democrats"—who wanted them? Kirkland, in fact, has been unheralded for his unexampled pioneering of the arguments that would help motivate Hart's voters to cast ballots for Reagan. Hart, said Kirkland, was "unacceptable" to labor. If Hart was "unacceptable," his voters must be too. By this line of reasoning, Kirkland—and his candidate—must then be "unacceptable" to them. Hart, Kirkland continued, had a "microchip mind." This was intended as an insult. Hart's constituency took it as a compliment, interpreting it to mean that his mind, unlike Mondale's, couldn't be organized by Kirkland. (Computer users voted for Reagan over Mondale, 62 percent to 37, according to *The New York Times*/CBS poll.) Then, clinching the case, Kirkland declared that choosing between Reagan and Hart would be choosing "between two Liberaces at the same piano." So there was no difference between them after all. It made perfect sense—Kirkland's sense—for 34 percent of Hart's voters to support Reagan.

IN MID-SPRING, when Hart momentarily appeared finished, Mondale attempted to incorporate Hart's theme of The Future, as if it were another constituency group mustering into the coalition. His speech on the subject was one of his finest statements on entropy. "The future was made in Heaven for America," Mondale said on April 19. If that were so, human intervention would seem to be beside the point. "We have everything we need for the future," he said, "except a leader to take us there." But if we need a leader, it must be because we need him to do things that aren't being done. "Instead of building our future, Mr. Reagan is dismantling it." Mondale saw Reagan and Republicanism as the source of decay, and he enumerated in great detail the many things that were running down. Government, to Mondale, was a bulwark against these almost random forces in the universe. But Mondale didn't promise to reverse all that Reagan had done. He admitted Reagan's power and our weakness as a united people. For Mondale was saying that even with all of us behind him we could only stop the tendency to decay. The conclusion of his speech was the image of his own retirement. "When we reach the year 2000, I hope to be a 72-year-old, happily retired former President." The implied comparison to the active 73-year-old Reagan only made Mondale seem passive and decrepit—another image of decay. Then Mondale added that we must "invent the future," an intrusion into his logic. His notion that America is fulfilled, except in the leader department, and at the same time decaying was incoherent. What he communicated was that he had little idea what the future was about, and he would be the ideal leader for this future.

THE BEST and most coherent summary of Mondale's position was made by Mario Cuomo. In his keynote address Cuomo became the best of all possible Mondales. He depicted Reaganism as timeless greed and America riven between haves and have-nots. Reagan was interchangeable with Hoover, except for his deceptive salesmanship. And if Reagan is an old-fashioned Republican, then the New Deal coalition *redivivus* could defeat him. Everything is as it was, if we could only penetrate Reagan's veneer. The future has already occurred, and we could get back to it. "We can do it again," said Cuomo, "if we do not forget."

The convention regenerated Mondale. For an instant, he was almost even with Reagan in the polls. Most important, the convention had given him Geraldine Ferraro, a running mate who offered the chance for thematic renewal. Together they were America's anchor team. Unfortunately, Mondale had no idea how to handle this sort of ethereal material. Immediately after he named Ferraro, he attempted to defenestrate Charles Manatt, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, while welcoming good old Bert Lance at the front door. Manatt declined to be pushed and Mondale wilted. The affair was a perfect recapitulation of the chaotic indecision of the Carter Administration. Lance was once again disgraced; this time his crime was loyalty to Mondale.

The euphoria of the convention was quickly dashed. Ferraro, revealing her tax returns, was cast by the press as the hanging victim in *The Ox Bow Incident*; in her famous press conference, she rewrote the script as *High Noon*, with herself as Gary Cooper. Mondale's instinct was to lie low, to be cautious, to wait and see. He passed up the opportunity to defend Ferraro's honor, and thereby to defend the fragile mythology that was beginning to grow around the couple. He returned to the scene only when the coast was clear, like the timid townsfolk who come out after the shooting stops, blinking in the sun.

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Ferraro had faced the gunslingers alone. In a curious symmetry, when Secretary of Labor Ray Donovan was indicted shortly afterward, Reagan immediately assailed the "lynch mob" atmosphere, proving that he was still the sheriff. Voters may have been more sympathetic to Reagan than they intended to be because his impetuous loyalty contrasted so strongly with Mondale's faint-heartedness.

MANY OF THE issues Mondale seized upon were opportunistic, but not opportunities. His pledge in his acceptance speech to raise taxes was not a New Deal. It was neither a program nor a philosophy. It was not even a strategy; it was a tactic. Its only purpose was to counteract the image of Mondale as over-cautious, as a man afraid to give offense. Once that purpose was served, the issue had no value, except to Reagan. But Mondale cleaved to it long after its odor was high. The issue was not the merit of the issue, but Mondale's insistence on its salience. He had given Reagan the one issue Reagan would have had to prove. If Mondale didn't exist, Reagan couldn't have invented him.

Mondale, moreover, did not grasp the symbolic undertow of the tax issue. He believed that sensible policy would bring Americans back to their normal political positions. Carter was an aberration; Reagan was an aberration; Mondale was normal. Yet he never comprehended Carter's anti-establishment appeal. Nor did he understand that Carter had threatened Americans' need to dream. By urging acceptance of pessimistic complexity—limits to growth, the zero-sum society, and, of course, malaise—Carter was demanding the end of the dream function. Americans vote to solve problems. In 1980, voters solved the problem of the death of dreams by electing the dreamy Reagan. As his alternative, Mondale offered a return to grinding reality, more grinding than that aberration Carter had offered. Instead of conveying the sense of possibility, he communicated the closing of frontiers. Reagan was unchallenged as the candidate of dreams.

Mondale appeared to reinvent his "strategy" every day, signaling ineffectiveness, instability, and insecurity. His views seemed to reflect the metabolism of his erratic schedule. Every day marked the announcement of a different issue: if it's Thursday, this must be toxic waste. It didn't look like he was generating issues; the issues were making the man. And they were presented as a series of tactical adjustments, not as conceptual premises. Mondale racked up issue upon issue, trying to win a war of attrition by a process of addition. What it added up to was Mondale, who was less than the whole. Because it was all said by the same person, he expected it would somehow all be coherent. By constantly shifting issues, he helped convince voters that he accommodated to short-term pressures. His confusion was a sign of inadaptability. He was trying desperately to evolve, but he couldn't transcend himself. Reagan, in the meantime, was thrown off balance only by the first debate. His strength of conviction and tight campaign management team then conveyed a sense of stability—a return to normalcy.

In the closing two weeks of the campaign, Mondale abandoned issues and sought to regain the Democratic Past from Reagan, a political kleptomaniac. In September, Reagan even unveiled a bust of Hubert Humphrey at the White House, with Muriel Humphrey and Joan Mondale present as props. Once Hubert had been stolen, what was left? Mondale, however, continued as the candidate of the party of memory. "I remember the first campaign I was involved in . . . Harry Truman in 1948," he shouted to larger and larger crowds. And he produced a letter Reagan wrote to Richard Nixon in 1960, comparing John F. Kennedy to Marx and Hitler. Mondale convinced us that, yes, he had voted for Kennedy. But he never showed us why he deserved J.F.K.'s endorsement. Actually, Kennedy's grandest new idea—Keynesianism—was one Mondale had jettisoned for his tax plan. What innovation did he propose in Kennedy's spirit? Reagan, for his part, didn't wait for others' endorsement. He endorsed those whose aura he coveted—Kennedy, Truman, Bruce Springsteen. Reagan was myth, Mondale anti-myth. Mondale reclaimed Kennedy and Truman, and Springsteen, still alive, announced he was a Democrat. But it made no difference. No matter how hard he tried, Mondale couldn't help but be Mondale.

THE FINAL SCENE of the final act was at hand. Everyone in the audience knew what the denouement would be. Too late, in adversity, Mondale's character became strong. It was a grace note. Then his campaign was overthrown, releasing all Democrats from his faint spell. Mondale, the perennial protégé, was without protégés. The curtain was drawn.

The Mondale campaign is the last word, at least for now, in a political outlook that may be called passéism. Its credo: anything that has been superseded has proved its worth. If it's gone, it's good. Nothing can be tried that hasn't already failed. Repetition is the road to perfection. The future is the endless rehearsal of the past. All that was missing from Mondale's version of liberalism was the concept of progress.

After Election Day, the passéists offered their commentaries. Mondale, some argued, was an insufficient Mondale. If he were Mondale squared, more of a traditional Democrat, a real "real Democrat," he might have beaten Reagan. Others argued that he simply had a bad personality. The apologists had justifications, but not answers; there was no evidence of self-criticism.

Mondale's candidacy was a barely sustainable rationalization of the position of the Washington establishment throughout 1984. Among the truths revealed by the campaign is that the party lords do not have the keys to the kingdom. But even with Mondale's defeat, they retain a unique power: the power to destroy any Presidential candidacy they wholeheartedly endorse. □

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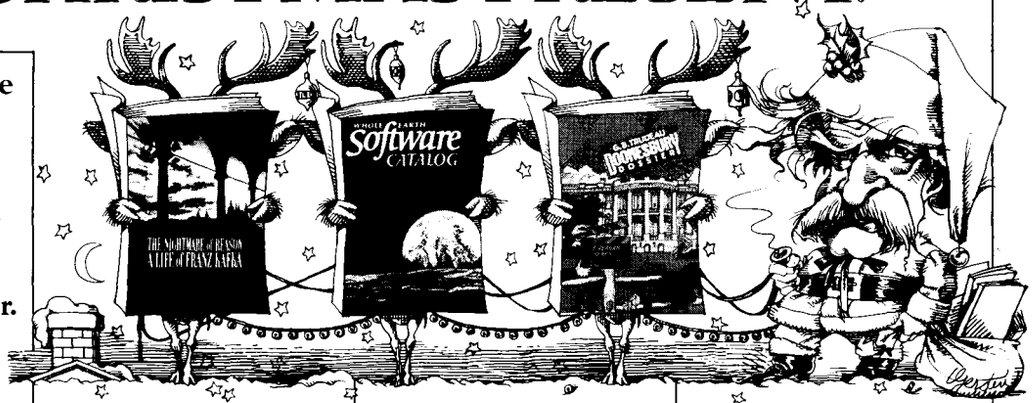

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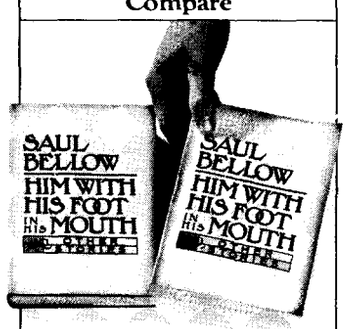

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Squabbles and red ink. Zoom in on Reagan.

REEL TWO, TAKE ONE

BY DAVID GERGEN

AS THE FIRST reel of the Reagan era ends and the second begins, the President must be wondering if the audience will still be in the theater when the movie ends. Indeed, applause from Election Day is already dying out. Wall Street is firmly signaling that substantial progress must soon be made against the deficits. Budget Director David Stockman has told Reagan not only that the deficit picture is worse than imagined but also that progress will be enormously difficult. The Democrats have made it clear they have no intention of helping the Administration out of any jam on taxes. And the supply-siders are telling him he should ignore the whole bunch and focus on tax reform.

Meanwhile, internal divisions are re-surfacing, sometimes with a nasty edge. *Human Events*, the President's favorite newspaper, storms in a front-page editorial that James Baker, the White House Chief of Staff, and one of the President's favorite advisers, should be replaced by the more conservative William Clark. Newt Gingrich, the intellectual leader of the hot-eyed young conservatives in the House, sends Stockman a letter accusing him of blocking the Reagan revolution; the letter quickly finds its way to *The Washington Post*, which gives it prominent display. And conservatives openly push the White House to find a Washington role for their new heroine, Jeane Kirkpatrick, who tires of the shambles at Oyster Bay.

As if these troubles were not sufficient, Republicans seem strangely eager to deflate the significance of Reagan's victory, allowing Democrats like Tip O'Neill and Tony Coelho to cast the President's triumph as entirely personal, with no lasting policy significance. Less than a week after the election, one of the most influential Republicans in the country told me, "The fizz has already disappeared. Things have gone flat."

If Reagan is to succeed in his second term, it is obvious that he must pull his team and his programs together in the next few weeks. Richard Neustadt, whose book on the modern Presidency, *Presidential Power*, is still the best, remarked a few weeks ago that "the fifth year of every recent President spells the same thing: trouble." If anything, he understates the case. Of the five Presidents returned to office in the past half-century, three—Roosevelt in 1936, Johnson in 1964, and Nixon in 1972—won by landslides. And each, as Neustadt says, came down with a wicked case of hubris.

However insufferable some of Reagan's supporters on the New Right may be (Terry Dolan of NCPAC springs easily to mind), Reagan himself tends to be gracious in triumph. He is unlikely to display the sort of arrogance shown by F.D.R. in 1937, when he tried to pack the Supreme Court, attacked southern Democrats, and wound up losing seventy-one Congressional seats in the next midterm elections. The hubris that undid the two more recent Presidents, however, is of a more disguised and subtle variety: the refusal to look reality in the eye. Lyndon Johnson promised in the 1964 campaign that he wouldn't send our boys into what he once called "that raggedy-ass, little fourth-rate country." A year later he began Americanizing the war in Vietnam by sleight of hand, and his Presidency started to unravel. In 1972, Watergate was still officially a "third-rate burglary," and Nixon was reelected. Reality came crashing in during the next year, and Nixon was gone before the midterm elections.

Will today's White House continue to insist that the deficit is a third-rate problem? The rhetoric of the campaign—like the rhetoric from supply-siders even now—leaves that impression. Whether the President and his team face up to the reality of the deficit before January is the most important issue hanging over them.

Another clear lesson of the past is the importance of a central strategy for the second term. The other two Presidents returned to office over the past half-century—Truman in 1948, Ike in 1956—lacked such a strategy. Truman, seeing little prospect of victory, had few plans to take advantage of it. Events rapidly conspired against him, and he was soon mired in trouble from which he never fully recovered. Eisenhower entered his fifth year without fresh vision. By spring he had lost control of his budget. (His Treasury Secretary, George Humphrey, attacked it on the day of submission, saying that unless Congress pruned it back "you will have a depression that will curl your hair.") As events continued to drift, from the defiance in Little Rock to the launching of Sputnik, Eisenhower drifted with them, and the midterm elections were a disaster for him.

Yet the fifth year can also be a time of enormous creativity. Truman set forth his idea of a "Fair Deal" then, along with his Point Four program. Even as Vietnam ate away at the foundations, Johnson turned 1965 into a spectacularly

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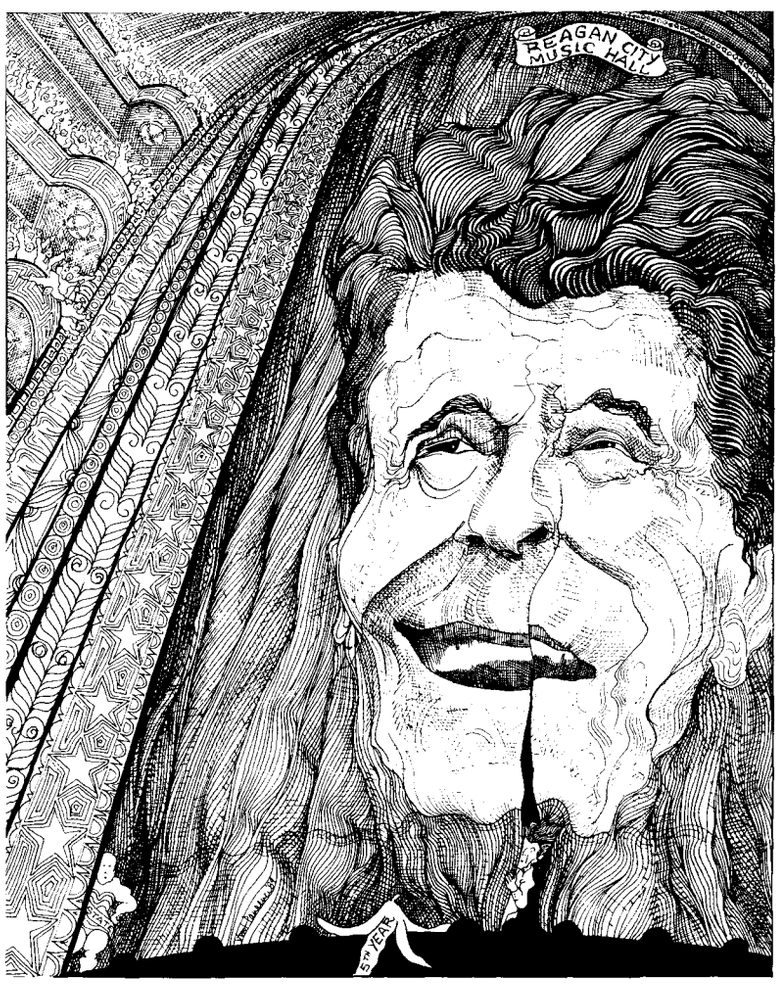
successful year for Great Society legislation. What this history suggests is that in 1985, Reagan must quickly set forth a new agenda—and that above all, he must face up to realities. He cannot afford to be passive, for time is now running against him. What should his priorities be?

Naming his team. Until Reagan makes it clear who is going with him into the future, his advisers will continue to devote their energies to anxious, self-destructive battles over turf. Before Christmas, Reagan needs to settle definitively on his staff.

Edwin Meese will soon depart the White House for the Justice Department, and Michael Deaver, the prime custodian of Reagan's lustrous image, may also leave. Given Chief of Staff Baker's reluctance to bring in new people to replace either, the President ought to elevate Richard Darman to a role such as Counselor (Darman, while not universally popular, is the best policy strategist in the Administration) and 33-year-old Craig Fuller, who is well respected by all factions, to Deputy Chief of Staff. Conservatives would not be happy with a Baker-Darman-Fuller team in charge, but it's time they recognized that these men were the pillars of Reagan's first-term success. Reagan likes to have strong conservative advisers around him, but, as has been shown, he also likes and needs more moderate ones, too.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The harder personnel choices are in the area of national security. The arms controllers would like to see Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and his assistant Richard Perle ensconced comfortably in embassies abroad; conservatives would like Kirkpatrick to replace Robert McFarlane as National Security Adviser. Neither move seems likely, despite Reagan's ideological crush on Kirkpatrick. For the moment, she is stuck in a holding pattern on the Eastern shuttle.

An immediate question on Reagan's mind is that of appointing an arms control "czar," someone who could break the impasse within his own bureaucracy and serve as an informal link with the Soviets in order to prompt formal talks. The names of two able men, Brent Scowcroft and Paul Nitze, have been floated. But neither would be likely to have enough clout to avoid getting carved up by infighting. Nitze, it will be remembered, got bureaucratically mugged during his "walk in the woods" in Geneva during the first term.

Unless Reagan is prepared to give an outsider total backing, there are probably better alternatives inside. One obvious move is to invest Secretary of State George Shultz with more complete control over arms policy. An intriguing option is to ask McFarlane to take over arms control negotiations, move Baker to the N.S.C., and have Deaver become Chief of Staff; this is a variation of a move Reagan approved last year but was talked out of by conservatives. Still another option is to ask George Bush to serve as arms control "czar," taking advantage of his past experience and advancing him down the track toward 1988. But the particular arrangement is less important than just making a firm decision and getting on with things.

The "window of opportunity" in arms control. People in the Administration say rightly that the United States is in the best position in years to negotiate with the Soviets. But the Administration must move swiftly before pressures begin to complicate the task. Allied governments which are deploying Pershing and cruise missiles are already quietly pressing for a resumption of arms talks; should nothing happen, they will go public with their complaint before the end of 1985. Congress, gearing up for another battle over the MX and a fight over "Star Wars," will also begin to muscle the Administration, perhaps holding defense initiatives hostage to progress in negotiations. The expiration of the terms of SALT II this coming fall will bring still further pressure.

No one knows how to revive the talks while ensuring that neither side loses face. The Russians dismissed past Reagan negotiating positions as cover for a buildup of U.S. arms. Reagan must now convince them that if they return to the table the United States is prepared to be flexible

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about the end result—for example, that while continuing R&D efforts on Star Wars, the United States would be prepared to suspend anti-satellite testing and to accept a modest, short-term reduction on both sides of missiles deployed in Europe. Equally important is for Reagan to become fully engaged in the process. Only then can he lay down the law to his own squabbling troops.

Deficits, taxes, and the end of the world. Nowhere is there more controversy and less certainty. Six months ago there appeared to be a general consensus in Washington that 1985 would bring a blockbuster legislative package to reduce deficits. No longer. As forecasters push back the date of the next recession, courage drains out of the political system. The moderates no longer have the fire. At the Dallas convention, the conservative "Young Turks" led by Gingrich and Jack Kemp signaled that they would not only fight higher taxes but seek lower ones. The fall campaign, during which Reagan rubbed the Democrats' noses in Mondale's call for higher taxes, left the Democrats in a mood to force Reagan to walk the tax plank alone; they won't make a move on tax increases until he asks them to. With supply-siders also violently opposed, it's difficult to see how the White House could form another bipartisan commission to develop a comprehensive package.

Much more likely is a deadlock over the deficit this coming year. The White House seems headed on a course of calling for deep and controversial domestic cuts, another hefty increase in defense, and a modified flat tax that brings in no more revenue. In the end, the hullabaloo over tax reform will probably obscure the more pressing need for deficit reductions. As the tax arguments proceed, Democrats and some Repubicans will refuse many of Reagan's proposed spending cuts while insisting on lower defense, the White House will dig in, and nothing will get done. Welcome to a rerun of the 1983 deficit debate and more talk of the apocalypse.

Meanwhile, Reagan has been force-fed on a flavorless diet in recent days. Budget Director Stockman rolled out the numbers, showing the recent drop in projected deficits to be temporary. Soon, the line of red ink will spiral upwards, clicking off $200 billion deficits "as far as the eye can see." One look convinces most people that the campaign formula of "Grace and Growth" won't work—that the savings proposed by R. Peter Grace along with sustained growth simply won't solve the problem. The President's economic advisers are estimating a future growth path of 4 percent a year, optimistic by recent experience but far less than the 6 percent needed to begin to wipe out deficits.

My bet is that Reagan will propose the expected cuts in farm price supports, Medicare, pensions, and government efficiency, along with a revenue neutral tax reform package and then immediately disown the high deficits on the theory that economists have been wrong in the past about low growth rates. Tax reform, he might argue, will unleash a new surge of growth. He will then play out his hand on spending cuts and tax reform as long as he can, seeing how much he can wrest from Congress. Should the process bog down and the economic outlook darken, he might throw in for a modest compromise at the end of the year, but only if he thinks he is getting a substantial gain in return. Given the current mood of both Democrats and Republicans, the chances of a comprehensive deficit package emerging from this morass seem rather small.

Social windmills: The second term is sure to bring renewed pressure by the President for voluntary school prayer, crime measures, and tuition tax credits. Abortion presents a stickier issue; even among the President's longtime conservative advisers, such as Meese, there is some hesitancy to push the issue as hard as the right-to-lifers want. If Reagan does fill new vacancies on the Supreme Court, his appointees are likelier to trim back rather than to reverse *Roe* v. *Wade*, the landmark abortion decision. Social issues could easily become the point on which the New Right ultimately breaks with the Administration.

A more striking opportunity is available to the Administration: to worry less about social programs and more about social progress. It cannot be a comfort to the President that poverty is continuing to rise in the United States, recently reaching its highest level in a decade and a half. Nor can anyone at the White House take satisfaction that between 1980 and 1984, the real disposable income (after inflation) of the bottom fifth of the population dropped by nearly 8 percent, while the top fifth rose by almost 9 percent. And the party of Lincoln has reason to be concerned as well by the racial polarization of the election.

The challenges of poverty—the homeless, the black, single women struggling to hold together families, the working poor—ought to rise to the top of Reagan's agenda. He would elicit an enormous amount of public support, and he would find it far easier to govern on other fronts, if he could mobilize the country to confront these issues instead of sweeping them out of sight. The Republican who has shown the most imagination about the working poor and could help the President the most on this front is Jack Kemp. Why not ask Kemp to take the lead?

WHAT ALL OF THIS suggests is that in the next term, unencumbered by the need to run again, Reagan has a chance of becoming even more of a national father figure than he already is. Of course, he cannot abandon his roots, either as a conservative or a Republican. But the man who Sidney Blumenthal has aptly called the Chairman Mao of the Republican Party could make himself the force that binds the country together and points it toward larger purposes.

Reagan needs to talk with Jesse Jackson as much as Richard Nixon, Tip O'Neill as much as William Buckley. Contrary to conservative cant, bipartisanship does not mean capitulation; it means enlarging one's prospects for governing. The tides will not long run in Reagan's favor. History speaks strongly against second terms. Democrats and even Republicans are in a more ornery mood already. Yet, if there is a single politician in America who has specialized in overcoming expectations, it is Reagan. He could make his last reel his best. □

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Why the voters rejected the Democrats.

HALF A REALIGNMENT

BY WILLIAM SCHNEIDER

"I survived."—Abbé Sieyés, when asked what he had done during the French Revolution.

WE SURVIVED. After counting the heads that rolled into the basket, our intrepid leader, House Speaker Tip O'Neill reassured us, "There is no mandate out there." *The New York Times* backed him up with scientific evidence: POLL FINDS REAGAN FAILED TO OBTAIN A POLICY MANDATE. Even the Republicans joined in. "It was a victory for his philosophy and a victory for him personally, but I'm not sitting here claiming it's a big mandate," said White House Chief of Staff James A. Baker III. And former White House Communications Director David P. Gergen remarked, "The Republicans won the election and the Democrats are winning the interpretation."

Perhaps, but it is an interpretation that sounds suspiciously like whistling past the graveyard. The fact is, the Democratic defeat was monumental in its proportions. We lost nearly every group, nearly everywhere. President Reagan's apparent lack of coattails—the Republicans suffered a net loss of two Senate seats and gained only fourteen House seats, one governorship, and four state legislative chambers—is a fact that obscures more than it reveals. Democrats are in the same position as the French aristocracy at the time of the Bourbon Restoration. We can pretend that nothing has really happened, but the *ancien régime* is dead. Things will never be the same. The problem for the Democrats is to avoid the fate of the Bourbons, of whom Talleyrand said, "They learned nothing and they forgot nothing."

What happened is simple enough. The election was a referendum on Ronald Reagan. President Reagan's job approval ratings have been holding steady at 55 to 60 percent for the past year, which is to say that throughout the campaign most Americans felt he deserved to be reelected. Reagan's 18-point margin over Walter Mondale on November 6 was the same as it had been in January. Not a single poll taken during the entire campaign showed Mondale with a significant lead over Reagan. In the *Los Angeles Times'* nationwide exit poll, almost half of the voters reported that they had made up their minds about how they were going to vote before the campaign even started last February; their decision was 2 to 1 for Reagan.

William Schneider is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and a political analyst for the *Los Angeles Times* and *National Journal*.

Reagan had two things going for him: the economy and foreign policy. Those are very big things. The Democrats got nowhere trying to convince people that the President had failed in either area.

The voters believed that Reagan did what he was elected to do: he curbed inflation and he restored the nation's sense of military security. As it happens, many people disagreed with the way he accomplished those things. Inflation was reduced at the cost of a severe recession. Our perceived military strength was improved at the cost of a significantly higher level of international tensions. Still, after four failed Presidencies in a row, it is rare enough to have a President who does what he was elected to do. As Reagan is fond of saying, "You don't quarrel with success."

Consider the economy. In the 1982 midterm election, the Democrats did very well with the fairness issue. Why didn't the issue work this year? Because in 1982, when the economy was bad, fairness meant *us*. In 1984, when the economy looks good, fairness means *them*.

What about foreign policy? The Democrats ran ads suggesting that Reagan was going to blow us all up. A lot of people were worried about that in 1980, but not this year. Reagan has been President for almost four years, and we're still here. The polls show that this time the voters were demonstrably less concerned with Reagan's recklessness, his intellectual competence, and his age. That's what incumbency does for you.

A lot of Democrats thought they could use the Administration's failure in Lebanon as an issue against the President. After all, many more American lives were lost in Lebanon than were lost in Iran. But Iran is still seen as a national humiliation and a disgrace. Lebanon is not. Why? Because when it became clear that our peacekeeping mission in Lebanon was not working, President Reagan had the good sense to cut our losses and get out. That, to many Americans, is leadership—the kind of leadership we did not get in Vietnam. During the Vietnam trauma, pollsters regularly asked Americans if they preferred a "hawkish" or a "dovish" policy in Southeast Asia. The answer they got over and over was, "We should either win or get out." What people didn't want was endless, pointless, escalating involvement. Well, what did Reagan do as President? In Grenada we won. In Lebanon we got out. So much for the Vietnam syndrome.

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As one election analysis put it, "He loves to display American military muscle, yet prefers to do so without there being any American victims. He supports peace from a position of American strength, but is against this strength resulting in the threat of a nuclear war." Precisely. But a policy portrayed by *Izvestia* as inconsistent and contradictory turns out to be exactly the foreign policy the American public wants.

WHAT DID NOT happen in the election is in many ways more interesting than what did happen. Contrary to expectation, Reagan did not sweep large numbers of Republicans into office. As House Republican leader Robert H. Michel complained, "Here the son of a buck ended up with 59 percent, and you bring in only 15 seats." The explanation, in a word, is incumbency. Incumbents have a large and growing advantage in American politics because of their dominance of the media, fund-raising, communications with constituents, and campaign technology. Americans regularly reelect over 90 percent of those members of Congress who decide to run for reelection. And most do.

Republicans actually did quite well this year in "open seats," where no incumbent was on the ballot. Open House seats were split about 50-50 before the election and ended up going 2 to 1 Republican. But they accounted for only 27 out of 435 contests. True, the Democrats gained 1 seat in the 4 open Senate races. But in the 7 open races for governor, G.O.P. control went from 3 to 6.

The exit polls reveal that, nationwide, almost as many people voted for Republicans as for Democrats in House races this year. Democrats nevertheless retained a 3-to-2 lead in the House. One reason is that Congressional district boundaries were redrawn by Democratic-controlled state legislatures after the 1980 census so as to protect incumbents of both parties by giving them districts with "safe" electoral majorities. It is significant, therefore, that more than 300 state legislative seats shifted to the Republicans this year. According to the Council of State Legislatures, "Presidential coattails tended to work best when a seat was vacant."

It was incumbency that saved the Democratic Party from ruin. If the government had passed a decree prohibiting incumbents from running for reelection, the Republican Party would probably have gained control of both Houses of Congress and a substantial number of statehouses.

They would probably have held on to the White House too. Much too much has been made of the personality factor in the 1984 election. Yes, Americans tend to like Ronald Reagan, and he is an effective television performer. But Walter Mondale's complaint that he lost the election because he could not communicate effectively on television is entirely unconvincing. One can hardly imagine less effective television performers—or less congenial personalities—than Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, or Jimmy Carter. The polls make it clear that if Ronald Reagan had run for reelection under the conditions prevailing in 1982 instead of 1984, he would have lost decisively, all his charm and amiability notwithstanding.

Several other things that did not happen:

The electorate was not, to any exceptional degree, driven by greed. Yes, people who felt better off voted for the incumbent and those who felt worse off voted for the challenger. But that was no more true this year than in 1980, or in 1976, or in any previous election. Moreover, voters' assessment of the nation's economy had a stronger and more consistent impact on their vote than their evaluation of their own personal well-being. People who felt that the country was beginning a long-term recovery voted for Reagan by a wide margin, no matter how they themselves had fared. And those who saw no improvement in the economy voted overwhelmingly for Mondale, even if they had become better off.

The gender gap did not widen. In fact, it got a bit smaller. In the end, the nomination of Geraldine Ferraro seems to have made little difference. Americans did exactly what they have done in the past: they voted for President, not for Vice President. After careful research, many voters who admired Ferraro discovered that they could not vote for her without also voting for Mondale. Women went for Reagan, Catholics went for Reagan, Italian-Americans went for Reagan, and New Yorkers went for Reagan. Even New York Italian-American Catholic women went for Reagan (54 to 46, according to one exit poll).

Mondale's share of the vote this year was no higher than Jimmy Carter's was four years ago, whereas Reagan's share went up by 8 percentage points. Does that mean John Anderson's supporters deserted the Democrats? Not at all. Anderson suporters accepted their leader's advice and voted Democratic this year, by 2 to 1. On the other hand, Reagan picked up one out of every five former Carter voters, mostly southern whites. Those who had not voted in 1980 also went heavily for Reagan.

THAT TOO was unexpected. The Democrats made a great deal of noise about a major registration campaign to expand turnout to 100 million voters. They failed dismally. Actually, those who registered for the first time between 1981 and 1983 (i.e., during the recession) split evenly between Reagan and Mondale. But those who registered in 1984—8 percent of the total vote—went 3 to 2 for Reagan. Thus the strong Republican advantage in organization and resources cancelled out the gains that the Democrats might otherwise have made.

Young voters went for Reagan by about the same margin, leading to much speculation about the newfound conservatism of the young. That too was nonsense. The young are still the most liberal age group in the electorate. They supported Reagan for many reasons, all unrelated to ideology. (See "Ronnie's Kids," by Chuck Lane, page 22.)

Last spring Mondale had a great deal of trouble with two groups of primary voters: young people and independents. They were the main elements of Gary Hart's con-

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stituency, and the evidence suggests that their motivation was more anti-Mondale than pro-Hart. (Hart substantiated this conclusion in a *Newsweek* interview last May. "[Mondale] thinks *I'm* his problem," Hart said. "I'm not his problem. *He's* his problem.") If young voters and independents had little interest in Mondale last spring, how astonishing can it be that they had little interest in Mondale this fall?

As a whole, the 1984 election was not ideological. On many issues, the voters were closer to Mondale's views than to Reagan's. These included abortion, military spending, arms control, the Equal Rights Amendment, Central America, and the role of religion in politics. The same thing was true in 1980: on a left-right scale, the voters placed themselves closer to Carter than to Reagan. Then, as now, the central issue in the election was performance—not personality or philosophy. There was widespread agreement in 1980 that on the basis of his performance, Carter did not deserve to be reelected. There was widespread agreement this year that on the basis of his performance, Reagan did.

What people were voting for in 1980 was not conservatism but change. What people were voting for this year was neither conservatism nor change but continuity. The fact that both elections were decided on the basis of performance rather than ideology is surprising only because Reagan is such an ideological figure. His achievement in 1980 was to win the support (at the last minute) of many voters who did not agree with him ideologically. He did it again this year.

WHICH BRINGS US to the subject of realignment. If the election was not ideological, how can anyone talk about a realignment? The answer is that, when realignment occurs, ideology is usually the last thing to change, if it changes at all.

For instance, there is little evidence that the electorate moved sharply to the left during the 1930s. In February 1936, in the midst of the Depression and only nine months before Franklin D. Roosevelt's landslide reelection, a Gallup poll found that 70 percent of the public favored cuts in government spending for the purposes of reducing the national debt. Voters did not accept F.D.R.'s New Deal philosophy until they were convinced that the New Deal worked.

A realignment occurs in two stages. First, the President has to demonstrate that his policies are effective. Only then do voters begin to convert to his vision of society. This year's election results suggest that the first stage has occurred. The second may be underway: the voters, when polled, revealed that they felt closer to Reagan than to Mondale on the issues—including many specific issues like abortion and Central America, where other evidence shows that people's positions are really closer to Mondale's.

The reason people seem to feel that they agree with President Reagan even if they really don't is that they believe his policies are working. The public's approach to the issues is pragmatic—whatever works must be right. Ideologues, on the other hand, believe that whatever is wrong cannot possibly work, even if it does work. Thus, many die-hard Republicans never admitted that the New Deal was a success, and many Democrats today refuse to believe there is a recovery. To pragmatic Americans, if big government policies worked during the New Deal, then they were probably right, at least for that time. If Reagan's anti-government policies are working, then they are probably right, at least for now.

THE EXIT POLLS also reveal a startling shift in the partisanship of American voters. In four nationwide exit polls taken on November 6, an average of 36 percent of the voters described themselves as Democrats and 32 percent as Republicans. That is a sharp change from the 42-to-28 percent margin reported in 1980. Large numbers of Democrats seem to have abandoned their party this year, some by voting Republican, some by rejecting the Democratic label, and some by staying home.

There have been marked changes in the nature of the Democratic vote as well. Compare Mondale's vote this year to the vote for Adlai Stevenson in 1956. Both were midwestern liberals, and both got about the same share of the national vote (41 percent for Mondale, 42 percent for Stevenson). But the sources of their support were very different. Mondale did significantly better than Stevenson among black voters, college graduates, women, Jews, and professionals. On the other hand, Stevenson's support was much stronger among whites, southerners, men, blue-collar workers, union members, and Catholics.

These shifts did not happen suddenly. Beginning in the mid-1960s, two streams of voters began leaving the Democratic Party—white southerners and Catholic "ethnic" voters in the North. The first stage of this realignment occurred in 1968 and 1972, when race and foreign policy were the major issues of contention. During this period, the Democrats lost most of their "social issue conservatives," primarily but not exclusively white southerners.

The second stage, 1980-84, has been much more devastating because the party has lost its credibility on economic issues. The economic issue had always held the Democratic Party together, even when race and Vietnam were tearing it apart. Since the 1930s, the Democrats have defined themselves more than anything else as the party that protects people against economic adversity. That's what kept white working-class voters in the party despite their mistrust of its racial and foreign policy liberalism.

Gallup polls show that the Democrats' long-standing advantage as the party more likely to keep the nation prosperous has vanished. In 1980, as a result of Jimmy Carter's economic failures, the voters saw no difference between the two parties on the prosperity issue. This year, as a result of Ronald Reagan's success, the Repubicans hold a 17-point advantage. If the Democrats cannot offer

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people economic security, what reason is there to stay in the party?

The Democrats have become less of a populist party and more of a liberal party. As the party has lost moderate and conservative Catholics and southerners, it has strengthened its appeal to blacks and educated upper-middle-class liberals. Over one-quarter of the votes cast for the Democratic ticket this year came from blacks. In the South, blacks were a majority of Democratic voters.

Remember this old vaudeville routine?

Doctor to patient with mysterious ailment:
Sir, have you ever had this problem before?
Patient: Yes.
Doctor: Well, you've got it again.

The Democrats have had this problem before. In 1968 and 1972, to be exact. And they've got it again. Mondale's vote looks very much like the disastrous votes for Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern, both northern liberal Protestants who, like Mondale, chose northern liberal Catholics as their running mates.

The result should be clear by now: when you offer tickets like that, you write off the South. Neither Harry Truman, nor John F. Kennedy, nor Jimmy Carter would have won the Presidency without southern electoral votes. Giving up the South wouldn't be so bad, except for the fact that the party is losing other constituencies as well. Catholics voted 59 percent for Humphrey in 1968, 48 percent for McGovern in 1972, and 44 percent for Mondale this year.

ESSENTIALLY THE national Democratic Party has lost its conservative wing, which used to be a considerable segment of the party. And its moderate support is diminishing fast. (Look at John Glenn's performance in the primaries this year.) To some extent, the party's losses on the right have been compensated by its gains among blacks and liberals, including liberal Republicans like John Anderson. Overall, however, the losses have outweighed the gains.

Which means the Democrats can no longer be called the nation's normal majority party. On the other hand, the Republicans cannot claim a natural majority of voters either. We are approaching a situation where the country is one-third Democratic, one-third Republican, and one-third independent. But keep in mind that, with the exception of 1964, independents have given the edge to the Republican candidate in every Presidential election since 1952.

Can the Republican Party hold itself together? At least one issue, religion, threatens to tear the party apart. Sure, it's a problem, but remember that in the New Deal coalition, southern racists, blacks, and northern liberals managed to stick together for thirty years, mostly by avoiding the subject of race. So far President Reagan has talked a great deal about the social issues, but has avoided placing them at the top of the Administration's agenda. If he decides to push the social issues in his second term, that could damage the party's future prospects.

How will we know if a realignment occurs? During the New Deal, Republicans liked to believe that Roosevelt's majorities were personal and would vanish when he left the political scene. So what happened after four straight F.D.R. victories? Harry Truman won, and the Republicans finally had to face the fact that something fundamental had changed. If the Republicans can win without Reagan on the ticket in 1988, then we will know the same thing has happened in our time.

Can the Democrats, a party that nominated William Jennings Bryan three times, learn anything from the disasters of 1968, 1972, 1980, and 1984? Maybe, but on the other hand, many Democrats believe that they tried another approach with Jimmy Carter. And look what happened.

A landslide for the Beer Party.

RONNIE'S KIDS

BY CHUCK LANE

WHAT IS IT with kids today? Campaigning for governor in California in 1966, Ronald Reagan vowed to "investigate the charges of communism and blatant sexual misbehavior on the Berkeley campus." Campaigning for President in 1984, he told wildly responsive student crowds: "Your generation is really something." At Woodstock, the mention of "Ray-Gun" evoked deafening boos. This year, college-age "Fritzbusters" heckled and harassed Reagan's opponent. "We finally have a hero, a role model," Ohio State's student government president told *The Washington Post*.

Reagan's spectacular popularity among youth (exit polls show he got about 60 percent of the 18-to-24 vote) occasioned a lot of chin-pulling in the media about a "new conservative mood on campus." It also puzzled Democrats, because ever since 1972, when the voting age was lowered to 18, liberals have done well among youth. (In 1980 the combined youth vote for John Anderson and Jimmy Carter exceeded Reagan's by almost 20 points.) Now the Republicans claim the under-25 set as their own. "This is a realigning election in which Reagan appears to be capturing the young in a manner similar to what Roosevelt accomplished in 1936," Republican consultant Charles Black told the *Post*.

Is the heavy Reagan youth vote really a portent of a conservative, Republican realignment? True, a *Los Angeles Times* exit poll found that 50 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds voted Republican for Congress, and that the age group as a whole is evenly split among Republicans, Democrats,

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and independents. But a close look at the polls and interviews with students suggest that young people were sending mixed signals this year, and that the Reagan tide doesn't necessarily run deep.

By steadying the economy and making careerism seem patriotic ("Go for the Gold"), Reagan appealed to the self-interest of today's students, who aren't exactly the anti-materialist rebels everyone remembers from the '60s. "I work my little tushy off for what I get," explains Cathryn Hollander, a Reagan voter from the University of California, San Diego, who registered independent so that she can get a government job no matter which party's in power. "I don't see why the government should give it to someone who won't even try." Also, young people linked Mondale to the weak leadership of Jimmy Carter. "I'll never forget how bad I felt when Carter was in," Mark Lipton, a University of Maryland senior, told me, "even though I didn't know exactly what he was doing." Paradoxically, Mondale was also hurt by the perception that he, not the incumbent Reagan, was the establishment candidate. In a pre-election *Los Angeles Times* poll, 18 to 24 was the only age group to say Mondale was "closer to special interests" than Reagan.

But these are more or less the same reasons everyone else voted for Reagan. Where's the evidence that youth are especially inclined to the right? Steven Baldwin, programs director of the New Right group, Students for a Better America, told *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "When you look at surveys, it's clear that students like Ronald Reagan's strength. But whether they are in agreement with conservative ideology is another question." According to the *Los Angeles Times* exit poll, 18 to 24 is still the only age group in which self-described liberals outnumber conservatives (by a margin of 9 percentage points). The same poll showed that the youngest voters strongly dislike Reagan's views on social issues and his ties to the religious right. Three-quarters of them oppose a ban on abortions; by a margin of 3 to 1, they disapprove of Jerry Falwell.

PERHAPS JUST as significant, 11 percent of the 18- to 24-year-olds in the poll also said that *no* issue had influenced their choice for President. And my conversations with pro-Reagan students at the University of Maryland, which Reagan carried handily (according to polls by the campus newspaper), confirmed that many of these young voters don't have firm political ideas at all. The students I spoke with were impressed with Reagan's image, not his ideology. Take leadership, one of the President's strongest points among the young. "Reagan looks good, he acts good, he's charismatic," said 20-year-old Sharon Schwartz. They seemed to recognize that Reagan's leadership is a contrivance of TV—but embrace it just the same. The President's job is "to project a good image for the country," another student told me.

When I asked young Reagan-backers which other politicians they admired, they either couldn't think of any, or gave names that fit no ideological pattern—Gary Hart, Elizabeth Dole, Geraldine Ferraro, Bill Bradley, Jack Kemp, Jesse Jackson. A young New Yorker said he admired Mario Cuomo because "he gives people the same feeling about New York that Reagan gives people about America." One woman mused that Reagan "should put Jesse Jackson in charge of foreign policy."

ONE FREQUENTLY cited indication of the rightward shift of youth is the rise of a new cadre of campus conservatives. Bolstered by money from the Coors Foundation, groups such as the U.S.A. Foundation and the Conservative Youth Alliance have appeared, and old standbys like Young Americans for Freedom and the College Republicans are growing, too. Curiously, the '80s right seems to have adopted the style of the '60s left. Reaganites stage "Free Afghanistan" and "Grenada Liberation Day" rallies, complete with bullhorns and burning (Soviet) flags. Updating an old anti-war chant at a Maryland pre-Election Day rally, a young Republican agitator cried, "What do we want?" to a responsive chorus of "Reagan"; and "When do we want him?" to shouts of "Now!"

But most students told me that behind these highly visible activists is a mass of apathy. They were right. According to the *Los Angeles Times* exit poll, about 13 percent, or 12 million, of this year's 92 million voters were between 18 and 24. Since the total number of 18- to 24-year-olds is about 29 million, this means that only 41 percent of them bothered to vote. That's better than the 1980 figure, 39 percent, but a little worse than the 1976 figure, 42 percent. Youth turnout has always been lower than that of other demographic groups. The basic reason is that the average young person, who lacks commitments like marriage, property, or a full-time job, doesn't feel the same personal stake in the political process as older people do. Apparently neither Reagan's popularity nor the ascendance of New Right ideology was enough to overcome this.

Far from being the vanguard of party realignment, the youngest voters may well be the harbingers of further "de-alignment." For some time now, political scientists have noticed that fewer Americans really care about belonging to a political party, both because people move around a lot, which makes such affiliations hard to maintain, and because television tells them what they need to know about candidates and issues. According to political scientist Martin Wattenberg of the University of California, Irvine, the percentage of strong partisans—the percentage of people who express positive feelings about one party and negative feelings about the other—fell from 50.1 percent in 1952 to 27.3 percent in 1980. Those with neutral feelings about both parties grew from 13 percent to 36.5 percent. This year's young voters show signs of continuing this trend. The *Los Angeles Times* exit poll says that just 12 percent called themselves "very Democratic" and only 8 percent "very Republican."

It will probably be a while before a generation with such a mixture of political tendencies really commits itself to a party or an ideology. The Republicans have the advantage for now, but young people are still up for grabs. □

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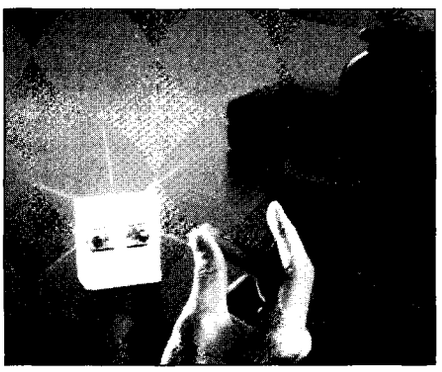

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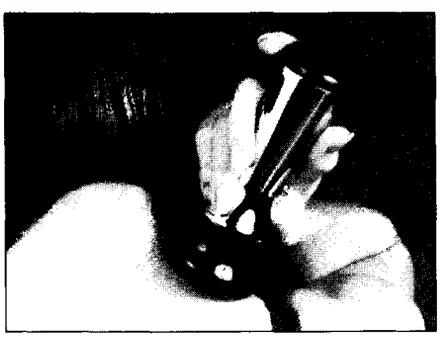

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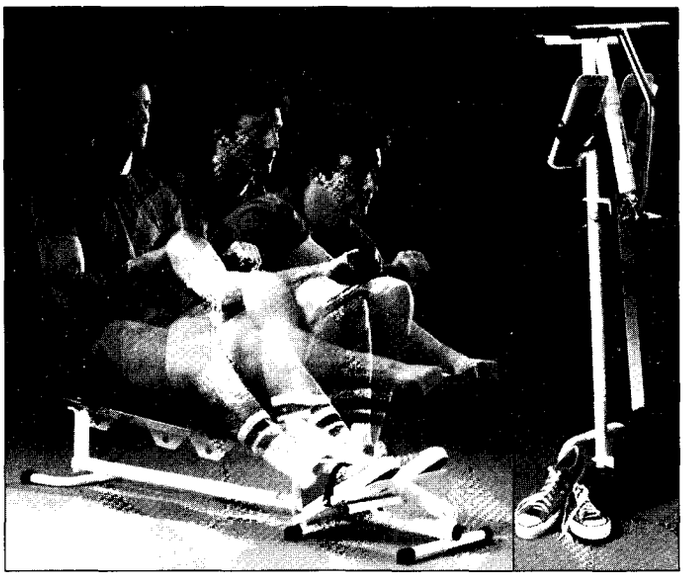

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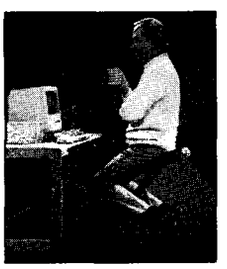
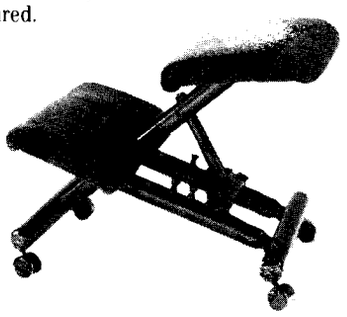
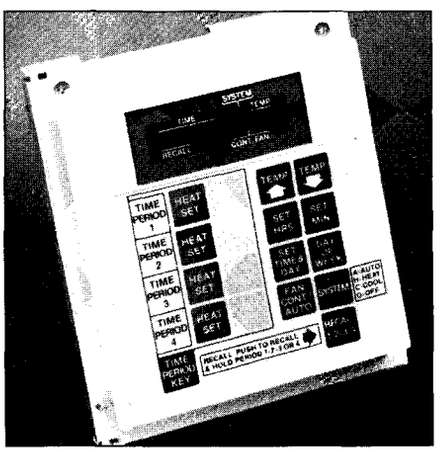


We are a civilization of desk-sitters. Yet most desk chairs are primitive instruments that cramp the breathing and circulation, stress the lower back muscles, tilt the spine, and leave us constantly shifting around trying to find a more comfortable position. The answer is not to change position but change chairs. The Adjustable Back Chair seats you in a whole new posture, opening the angle between torso and legs and freeing the diaphragm, supporting some of the body weight on the knees and lower legs, unbinding the spine to align naturally in a position of perfect balance. The body is relaxed and balanced, allowing you to work for long periods without fatigue or restlessness. The chair is handsomely made with durable plush poly-cotton upholstery in neutral rust, is equipped with removable all-purpose carpet and floor casters and adjusts to 4 different positions. Adding to the comfort is the fact that the price is well below most office or desk chairs — only **$79.00** ($10.95) #A1306 each. Minimal assembly required.



THERMOSTAT THAT THINKS YEAR-ROUND



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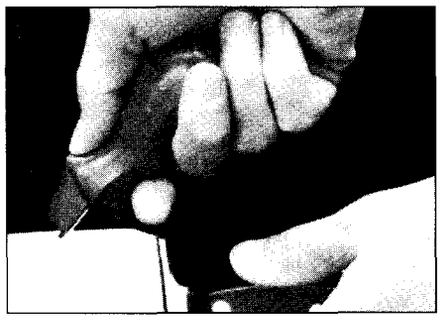

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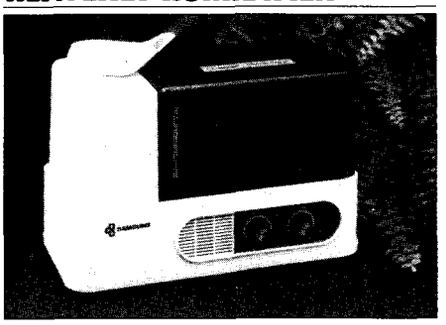

Here's one of the hottest houseware products of the past decade. With good reason — the ultra-sonic humidifier does an important job extraordinarily well. Using extremely high-frequency sound waves, it breaks water molecules into a mist so fine that one tabletop unit humidifies an entire 1500 sq. ft. house or apartment. Operation is virtually noiseless — and completely safe (the vapor stream is cold, even though it *looks* like hot steam). The Samsung ultra-sonic humidifier unit shown here weighs 8½ lbs., measures 16″ x 8½″ x 12⅔″ with removable 1.3 gal. smoked acrylic reservoir fillable at any sink. Mist volume control allows selection of mist intensity and humidistat automatically turns unit on and off to maintain preselected humidity levels. Unit automatically shuts off when empty, emitting nozzle swivels 360°. **$109.00** ($10.95) #A1313.

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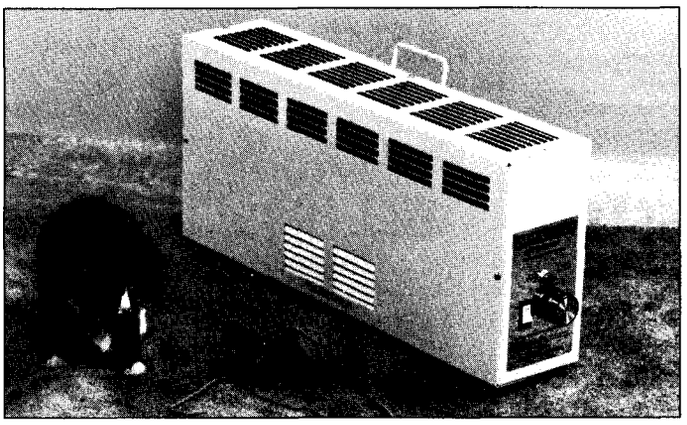

Keeping your thermostat (and your heating bills) down doesn't necessarily mean you'll need to spend the winter shivering from the resulting chilliness. The new Porta-A-Steam heater uses a maintenance-free sealed steam system to get heat flowing where you need it in just 3 minutes. Draws only 1000 watts (compared to 1500 for oil-filled radiators and hot-wire heaters) yet provides room temperatures as high as 80°. Sturdy steel casing remains touchable at all times — no fear of burns or fires. Eminently portable, weighs only 12 lbs., measures 22″ x 10″ x 4¼″. Adjustable thermostat control, continuous fan operation to circulate warm air, safety cutoffs, 1-year warranty. Porta-A-Steam is the sensible supplemental heating alternative. **$79.00** ($10.95) #A1226 each. UL-approved. Ideal around children or pets.

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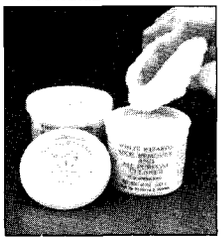

We tried White Wizard cleaner on a rug stain of several months' standing. The rug came clean. We tried it on the grass-stained knees of the kids' blue jeans. They came clean. Now it is the first thing we reach for when confronted with a grease, oil, blood, ink, berry, fruit juice, lipstick, coffee, tea, smoke or pet stain. We have found White Wizard exceedingly mild-mannered — odorless, neutral Ph, non-abrasive, biodegradable, compounded of 9 non-toxic chemicals. Two 10-oz. tubs cost **$12.00** ($2.95) #A1008.

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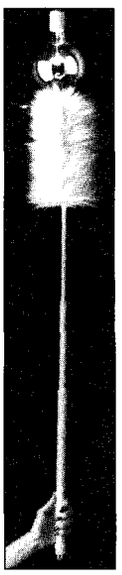

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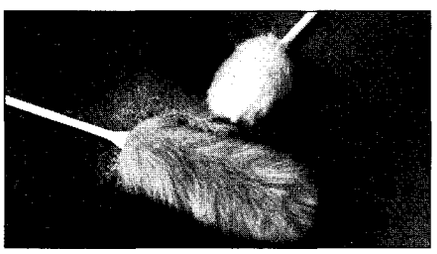

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Invasion of the Culture Snatcher

Paris, Texas is the latest, and perhaps the longest, product of America's impact on postwar European films. Almost all European countries reflect that cultural impact in some of their films, sometimes quite markedly. The French New Wave welcomed the postwar influx of American films as part of the liberation that came with victory. The younger Germans responded to American culture, especially films, as if in rejection of their Nazi forebears; they pointedly embraced everything that those forebears had decried in America. And no contemporary German director shows American influence more clearly than Wim Wenders (b. 1945) who directed *Paris, Texas*.

Paris, Texas
(TLC Films)

When he was a film student in Munich in the late 1960s, Wenders made shorts based on American pop music. His first feature (not widely released) had an English title in Germany, *Summer in the City*, and also used American pop. His next film was German, and it's no coincidence that this is his best—made from a novel by his friend Peter Handke, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*. (Several years later he produced *The Left-Handed Woman*, directed by Handke.) Then back Wenders went to American things with a version of *The Scarlet Letter* that seemed to have been made under anesthesia, followed by *Alice in the Cities*, a wandering story that wandered through America in its first half. His next two films, *Wrong Movement* and *Kings of the Road*, were set in Germany, but both strained to be American "road" pictures, trying to imply American space. Then came a thriller called *The American Friend*: a leading character was an American in Germany, and the cast included Samuel Fuller, the American director who is idolized abroad. Wenders then went to San Francisco to make a picture, not widely released and which I've not seen, called *Hammett*, a fantasy about the author. This was followed by *The State of Things*, a low-budget, black-and-white feature done in Europe and Los Angeles about making a science fiction feature; in the cast were Viva, the Andy Warhol star, and Samuel Fuller again. Now Wenders must feel that he has reached his zenith: *Paris, Texas* is two and a half hours, in color, and was shot entirely in western America, with a slide-guitar score by Ry Cooder.

But to me the picture is the biggest mistake that a talented man has so far made. Wenders collaborated on the story with Sam Shepard who then wrote the screenplay, which was worked on further by L. M. Kit Carson. Shepard, powerful dramatist and actor and theater director though he is, skids here as badly as he did in the script of *Zabriskie Point* for Antonioni. He was not sole author for Antonioni either, but the earlier script and the present one share Shepard's improvisatory feeling, a meandering intended as significance. Shepard says that the film form is beautiful when studios don't intrude. Apparently "intrusion" means a request for formal narrative; but who would complain about informality if the results were satisfying? *Paris, Texas* not only doesn't know where it's going when it starts, it doesn't know where it has arrived when it's finished. And there's a great deal of tedious stuffing in between. Shepard's freedom, plus Carson's polishings, produces only disproportion and—harsh but apt word—silliness. Even the dialogue, usually superb in Shepard, is dull.

The beginning implies immensity. The protagonist, played by Harry Dean Stanton, is wandering through the Texas desert near Mexico, wearing a soiled suit and shirt and tie, unshaven, looking (which is untrue) as if he had walked out of an office some days before and headed into emptiness. To freight the situation further, a vulture watches as he drains his last drop of water. At last he stumbles into a bar, which just happens to be in the middle of nowhere; he faints and wakes up in a clinic, also conveniently located in mid-desert, attended by an ominous German doctor. The doctor questions Stanton; he won't speak a word. The doctor finds a card in Stanton's wallet, calls a Los Angeles number, and reaches Stanton's brother, who hasn't heard from Stanton in four years. By the time the brother, Dean Stockwell, arrives at the clinic, Stanton has wandered into the desert again. Stockwell finds him and gets him into the car, but he remains mute. He wanders off again; Stockwell finds him again. At last Stanton speaks; and almost his first words are that he won't fly, so Stockwell has to drive him all the way home to L.A.

After this hugely portentous opening—desert, vulture, dogged muteness, attempts to flee back into the desert—we expect the revelation of nothing less than a Conradian mystery. What we get is, first, a tiny domestic drama of the reunion of a father (Stanton) and his small son that no TV producer would accept; then father and son set out on a search for the wife/mother who also disappeared four years ago. Finally Stanton finds her in a peep-show place

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Amadeus. Dollops of Mozart and magnificent settings, lots of distortion about Mozart and Salieri, but a much more agreeable fiction than the original play. (Reviewed 10/22/84)

Bizet's Carmen. And how. Excellently directed and photographed, with a fine Carmen, Julia Migenes-Johnson, a good tenor and baritone. Smash. (10/1/84)

A Soldier's Story. A black army captain investigates the murder of a black sergeant at a Louisiana camp in 1944. A touch homiletic but well made. (10/15/84)

Stranger than Paradise. Unique, drily witty, neatly balanced. Three laid-back young people float along on their lives. An extraordinary first film by Jim Jarmusch. (10/29/84).

SK

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in Houston. This runaway Texan wife is played by Nastassja Kinski, perhaps because her first film role was in Wenders's *Wrong Move* ten years ago—there doesn't seem any other reason.

Kinski sits in a brightly lighted cubicle, facing a mirror; the customer, Stanton, sitting in a dark cubicle, can see her *through* the mirror. He proceeds to tell her a long story, almost every detail of which she already knows, just so that we can hear it, a story of domestic troubles that don't remotely justify the large-scale epic opening two hours and twenty minutes earlier. The film ends with a stupidly incredible reunion between Kinski and her son arranged by Stanton, who drives off alone again, leaving the viewer to wish that no one had found him the first time.

And the symbols! The oxymoronic title (the name of a real town, used here mythically); the brother wandering mute in the desert set against the brother whose vocation is building billboards that shout in a noisy city; the massive wind-carved rocks of the desert set against the massive man-carved skyscrapers of Houston; the pane of glass between the husband and wife who never communicated properly. As for the hitches in the narrative, they are so numerous and the film is so casual about them that it would be a waste to deal with them.

Apart from Kinski, who is egregiously miscast, the actors are all right. Stanton, moved from supporting roles to a lead, isn't sufficiently arresting to be at the center, but he does well enough at creating a sorely troubled man. Stockwell, who began as a child actor in 1945, tries to give the stable brother some warmth; then the film simply drops him and his wife, leaving their story unclarified. Stockwell's wife is played by a French actress, Aurore Clement. Why French? Possibly to lend some resonance to the first half of the title.

Wenders's direction is, at its best, utterly ordinary. Sometimes he slips below that level: for instance, he shows Clement sitting up in bed naked in her L.A. home listening to Stanton downstairs, a shot with suggestions that don't materialize; and he uses the platitude of fitting Stanton's reflected face exactly over Kinski's on the glass between them. The editor, Peter Przygodda, cuts from face to face in the many question-and-answer scenes—tick-tock tick-tock—with a banality that italicizes the banal dialogue. And the way that the cinematographer, Robby Müller, shot L.A. and Houston made me think he must have studied the way that Alfio Contini shot *Zabriskie Point*.

Wenders, in my view, is committing prolonged artistic suicide. Most of his work shows him agonizing because he was not born American and cannot make American films from the inside. To compensate, he has spent the bulk of his career in absorbing Americana and trying to utilize it like a native. His persisting push to naturalize himself has only resulted in the degradation of the exceptional, very European sensibility that he showed early on. What lies beneath the many faults of *Paris, Texas* is that fundamentally he is insecure. His judgment of drama and growth is not finely tuned, his eye is looking for what he has seen in previous films. He arranges visual symbols as if they in themselves could make art, instead of being the perceptible data of deeper perceptions. *Kings of the Road* was a lesser film for me than for many, but at least it conveyed some sense of a director who knew his people, knew precisely what was troubling them and what they were encountering, and could render it knowledgeably. *Paris, Texas* is crammed with the acquired and imitative, eager to pass as the real thing. Wenders is not the first European director to try to Americanize his films, but his career is one of the most melancholy wrecks along that road. I hope it's not too late for him to go home and be a German director again.

I should note that *Paris, Texas* won the Palme d'Or at this year's Cannes Festival. Well, *The State of Things* won the Golden Lion at the Venice Festival in 1982. By now the reader must have observed that festival prizes, like dreams, often go by contraries.

The old and the new at the New York City Ballet.

BALANCHINE AFTER BALANCHINE

BY HARRIS GREEN

THE UPCOMING season of the New York City Ballet, which opens this week, is the fifth since Balanchine was incapacitated, and the fourth since he died but, thanks to the successful revival last spring of his *Liebeslieder Walzer*, it will be the first in which the good word "continuity" can be confidently used in discussions of his company and its repertory. Until the return of *Liebeslieder*, "change" was the word that dominated every interview given by N.Y.C.B.'s co-ballet masters-in-chief, Peter Martins and Jerome Robbins. Change, they insist, is not only inevitable, but essential to maintain City Ballet's future as a creative institution (with hosts of subscribers to placate). New works—choreographed mostly by them, of course—must be the life's blood of the company, not its Balanchine treasury. Robbins, in an audience with Anna Kisselgoff of *The New York Times* last spring, used considerable polemic to defend this policy of stressing the new. City Ballet's chief mission, he said, cannot be "preservation"—note the whiff of formaldehyde that word emits—and he quoted the late impresario Sol Hurok, of all people, on the importance of pleasing audiences by producing "novelties"—Hurok, who must have presented the Royal Ballet in scores of *Swan Lake*s for every performance of Ashton's *Monotones*!

Reaction to such remarks veered from impatience—and one is prepared to be very patient with Martins and Robbins, for the responsibilities they bear—to an unsettling blend of dread and dismay over their bringing up the matter in the first place. Surely everyone is aware that change is unavoidable in an art form as evanescent as ballet, where tradition, until fairly recently, was built upon fallible memory and malleable interpreters. Change had been a constant at N.Y.C.B. when Balanchine lived. He revised the finale of *The Four Temperaments*, that most seminal of classics,

Harris Green is a New York City editor who writes on music, theater, and dance.

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THE OTHER MR. B

Portrait of Mr. B
Photographs of George Balanchine

(Viking Press, 144 pp., $30, $12.95 paper)

In 1943 Herbert Bliss, Nora White, and Stanley Zompakos, young students at the School of American Ballet in New York, decided they needed training in music. All three would soon join Les Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo. John Coleman, one of the school's pianists, agreed to give them classes, including some Dalcroze. The sessions began while Balanchine, the school's director, was in Europe. When he returned and heard about the scheme, he instructed Coleman to stop the classes and told the students they had no need of special instruction in music.

In the 1960s, at the height of its success, the New York City Ballet established a regular summer season at Saratoga. Balanchine began to take an interest in the races and increasingly liked to compare the dancers in the company to race horses. "They don't talk. They just go."

Balanchine's genius both as a choreographer and as company director has inspired so much awe and admiration that the only criticisms heard in years concern temporary lapses of taste or inventiveness in his ballets. He receives credit for single-handedly creating an American ballet tradition. Balanchine was a soft-spoken, concentrated artist who earned the respect of his troupe by patience and hard work, never by displays of temperament. Still, we must not overlook a strain of superiority and condescension in his paternalism. He wanted these wonderful New World bodies to become the promised instruments of an Old World tradition transmitted by himself and a few like him. The school Balanchine founded with Lincoln Kirstein offered nothing but classes in technique. My first anecdote suggests that he did not wish to give these babes in the woods the cultural breadth and opportunity that conservatory training in music, literature, and languages had given him. American ballet choreographers emerged very slowly. A cynic might go so far as to ask whether progress in truly American ballet occurred because of or in spite of the presiding presence of Balanchine.

I am not so much of a cynic. Balanchine may have discouraged intellectual and artistic enterprise among his dancers in favor of pure technique. But he gave without stint of his talents and, by developing a school and a company in close association, founded a central institution that furnished all other forms of dance in the America with a high standard to refer to and react to. I regret the convergence of tastes from fashion and from ballet that produced the ideal of the skeletal woman, a fleshless figure of abstract lines. Still, for forty years the choreography Balanchine devised for his company galvanized our responses to dance, and he left more of a mark than we yet acknowledge on musical comedy.

Portrait of Mr. B is a slender collection—composed mostly of familiar photographs—sponsored by the Ballet Society. It does not enlighten us on any of the matters just mentioned. Peter Martins's brief foreword has a few down-to-earth comments about Balanchine as administrator, "keeping his company in good repair." In a twenty-page essay Lincoln Kirstein talks mostly about Balanchine's moral stance as a ballet master. Balanchine's insistence on ballet as above all a discipline flew in the face of our modern liberation from Puritanism through progressive education, modern dance, and other therapies. Kirstein emphasizes Balanchine's sense of ballet as ritual, even as spiritual communion, "icons for the laity." These extensive cultural claims contrast forcefully with Edwin Denby's play-by-play description and analysis of *Agon*, Balanchine's choreography to Stravinsky's music. Denby's fluency, his exhibition of total verbal mimesis of dance, becomes very self-conscious in its choice of metaphors: athletics, cool jazz, "a New York Latin in a leather jacket." But Denby never shifts his eyes and ears from his subject, which is the movements of the dancers to the music. The name Balanchine appears once, in the first sentence. The rest is dancing, vividly and poetically evoked.

Between Kirstein and Denby come 130 pages of black-and-white photographs arranged in chronological order. The sequence gives us glimpses of the development of the ascetic (or stick) female dancer. The pictures appear to have been chosen primarily to show that Balanchine put his ballets together not by naming steps and making comments to the dancers, but by himself demonstrating positions, movements, and dynamics in rehearsal. He is always restrained, patient, a bit tentative in his postures. His dancers all remember how he held their attention not by raising his voice, but by lowering it to the level where everyone had to be quiet or miss the message. There are also two interviews with Jonathan Cott that make the same old points about not trying to explain dance with words, about craftsmanship over creation (God took care of that), and about the priority of the present over the past even in ballet.

In July 1983, three months after Balanchine died, *Dance Magazine* devoted a special number to him. It is a miscellany like *Portrait of Mr. B*, and contains many of the same photographs. The magazine also includes a fine memoir by B. H. Haggin, one of the choreographer's earliest supporters, and a reassessment by Glenn Loney of Balanchine's work for Broadway and Hollywood. If you can tolerate the constant provocation of ads for dance wear, you will find more substance and variety in the special number than in the Ballet Society's nicely printed yet disappointing album.

ROGER SHATTUCK

Roger Shattuck teaches literature at the University of Virginia. *The Innocent Eye*, a collection of his essays, has just been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. He is married to Nora White, former soloist with Les Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo and with Les Ballets de Paris.

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thirty years after its première. He regularly altered solos to suit the gifts, or lacks, of dancers. Admirers are of two minds about some of these alterations, but everyone welcomes those changes that occur when great dancers assume new roles. Even if the original steps are danced, the multitude of intricacies required can cause any good performance to become a fresh creation glistening with myriad subtleties. "Changes" involving artistry of the highest order make it possible to return to City Ballet night after night with the insatiable hunger of an addict.

UNFORTUNATELY, until *Liebeslieder* returned, such excitement was absent from most of the Balanchine works revived since his death. The repertory he had supervised was danced with, if anything, extra authority and devotion by principals, soloists, and the hardest working corps in all ballet. But not until *Allegro Brillante* burst upon us last spring did a revival display genuine élan. Tightly matched to a one-movement "concerto" for piano and orchestra by Tchaikovsky, abstract from beginning to end, this 1956 gem demands nothing short of classical dancing of the highest order. Heather Watts, least scrupulous of company ballerinas and mistress of a grand manner that easily lapses into mannerism, looked flustered attempting to meet its pell-mell demands. Merrill Ashley, displaying a welcome softness in her carriage and arms, met them at full speed with dazzling clarity. Their most frequent partner was the gangly Dane, Adam Lüders, whose technical facility has never compensated for his disproportionate physique, and his inability to link steps into something resembling a phrase. At least Lüders's eager (if amusical) approach stood him in good stead in this tumultuous work. The corps, often containing as many as five dancers of soloist rank, tore into their steps with infectious brio; repeating a combination of leaps and spins in overlapping canonic sequence, they turned the stage into a scintillating fireworks display. *Allegro Brillante* caused almost any ballet that immediately followed to seem a fizzling anticlimax.

Longer, more difficult Balanchine works (all of them in this season's repertory) had returned with diminished luster. *Jewels* was weakly cast and burdened with tacky, alarmingly oversized settings created by the Broadway designer Robin Wagner. We have adjusted to worse scenery at N.Y.C.B. than his vision of a Tiffany's branch catering to *nouveau riche* Brobdingnagians, but we will have to work at it. *Harlequinade*, that gently cloying fairy tale, was not weakly cast but miscast. Daniel Duell and Ib Andersen, who alternated as Harlequin, are essentially elegant dancers with little of the impacted rascality of the role's creator, Edward Villella. Neither seemed adequately coached.

Far more dispiriting was the revival of *Bugaku*, a travesty so irredeemable it made one fear that wrongs only Balanchine could have righted were now possible. *Bugaku*, made in 1963, was a unique touchstone for judging continuity. It was a rare venture into the exotic and the erotic, a free variation upon Imperial Japanese court etiquette in which stately comings and goings flank a pas de deux of electric sensuality. Balanchine enhanced its effect through daring contrasts. By setting the ritualistic assemblies of two principals and their four attendant couples to the plangent, whining sonorities of a contemporary score by Toshiro Mayuzumi, he created an undertone of tension that the pas de deux brought to ultimate tautness. His quirky adaptation of classical vocabulary went beyond mere *japonaiserie* to achieve quiet moments of humor (as when Mayuzumi's mewlings made one think the women were comparing notes on the recently departed men) and unexpected intensity (the five women flexing their ankles as they prepare to make their first exit almost always set off *frissons*).

As was usually the case with a Balanchine ballet, the dancers it was made upon performed it best. Allegra Kent and Edward Villella had gifts that inspired sensationalism and artistry that forestalled it. Balanchine needed Kent's air of innocence and Villella's unassertive masculinity as much as he needed her suppleness and his strength. No other pair maintained the austere impact of a ritual while performing the couplings of that pas de deux. After Mayuzumi's final, splintery chord swept them and their attendants to the floor in massed obeisance at curtain's fall, one felt exhilarated at the risks Balanchine and his dancers had run so stylishly. It had been greatly missed.

This spring, when *Bugaku* finally returned with no one but Watts and Bart Cook in the leads, one's sense of loss

Distinction

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was not assuaged but intensified. Watts had much of Kent's flexibility, but her smugly tough expression at the height of the pas de deux suggested the anything-but-virginal musing: "I've had better." Cook, frowning grotesquely, ignored most of the courtier in his role to model himself upon a samurai (John Belushi as well as Toshiro Mifune, apparently, to judge by the boorish way he flounced and stomped about). Performed by this pair, the pas de deux ceased to be erotic; it lapsed into the pornographic and sagged here and there into the grimly comic. Cook's corps-boy attendants echoed his surly misconception. Watts's girls understandably cowered at their approach, though not with unanimity.

THE OVATIONS that greeted *Liebeslieder Walzer*, then, were fueled by more than joy over the return of so special a work after ten years' absence. There was relief that David Mitchell's new setting, an evocative variation on a rococo salon in the Amalienberg in Munich, was for once an improvement on the original scenery and a handsome achievement in itself. And there was, of course, immense gratitude for the dancers. No one person can be credited with the success of a ballet requiring sterling ensemble work, but Karin von Aroldingen must be saluted first. She had danced *Liebeslieder* often, had set it on other companies, and had supervised this revival with obvious devotion. (For what it's worth, neither Kent nor Villella had helped set *Bugaku*.) Von Aroldingen realized that it is not enough to repeat steps accurately or ape a unique dancer's style. Kyra Nichols, for instance, does not imitate the inimitable Violette Verdy in assuming her central role, but phrases with her own innate musicality and great strength to achieve delicately nuanced gesture and powerfully expressive line. Like Verdy, she can phrase out the overtones of a chord with her fingertips. Nichols needs to work more on her facial expression—presently more heartburn than heartache—and to sit up straighter when she awaits her turn to rejoin the dancing—a lapse in hauteur Verdy never permitted. But enough quibbling! Grandeur similar to Verdy's is more than anyone ever hoped to see again. The season's first cast—Nichols, Patricia McBride, Suzanne Farrell, Stephanie Salande—is the equal of any I've seen, and their partners—Joseph Duell, Cook, Sean Lavery, Ib Andersen—are the best set of men yet.

Many in the audience were also cheering out of a sense of reaffirmation. For this was Balanchine's company, and *Liebeslieder* demonstrates a great truth about art that Balanchine embodied as few twentieth-century artists cared, or dared, to: when a creator builds upon tradition the boundaries of form are a challenge, not a constriction. Balanchine prospected often on foreign soil—and found gold there more often than not—but classicism was his native ground, where he ranged so widely he redefined our concepts of "style." No plot of this ground was too narrow for him to work, and he never achieved more grandeur from such constriction than he did in *Liebeslieder Walzer*.

He seemed to have boxed himself in completely. He chose two intimate song cycles that Brahms composed for duo pianists and vocal quartet, then restricted himself further by working with only four dancer couples. For the first cycle, staged as a social gathering in Brahms's time with the musicians onstage, he even denied himself two of the ballerina's more potent weapons, her point work and the line of her legs, by having Karinska costume the women in low-heeled slippers and ball gowns. Such denials fed his inspiration. He devised extraordinarily expressive gestures for the women's arms, and steps that made their legs seem absolutely awesome, looming or tossing under Karinska's sumptuous folds. For their partners, he created lifts of an ingenuity that would have astonished Petipa. Far from permitting the waltz to lock him into one form of dancing, he made the waltz (except for two fleeting ensembles) deliquesce into forms of his own invention. He also ignored the *lieder*'s folksy text—but never Brahms's music—to sketch intriguingly unspecific scenarios for each couple; when done during a melancholy passage, a man's averting his gaze from his partner behind his upraised hand had an impact that a dramatist needed pages of dialogue to achieve. Nocturnal poetry has permeated this candlelit salon long before the couples conclude Part I by strolling out into the enveloping darkness.

After what has always seemed the longest, most damnable "pause" in the City Ballet playbill, the curtain rises on the second, far more impassioned set of *Walzer*. The musicians are still where they were, but we are now in the moonlit realm of romantic ballet, with the women transformed into ballerinas in clouds of multilayered tulle. Lifts abound, leaps punctuate phrase after phrase and exits, which no one had any need to make before (until the stroll en masse), are done often and at top speed. The men had frequently gone to the knee in homage to their earthly partners; now the ardor aroused by these visions rouses them to pursuit. That quintessential Balanchine image—woman adoringly supported by man—occurs again and again, suffused with rapture, repeated with inexhaustible invention.

His most daring stroke—a risk only a genius would take—was saved for the final *lied* (the only one to a text by Goethe). It begins with only the musicians onstage. Its mood is meditative, resigned. As the candles flicker back to life, the dancers, now in formal wear, return two by two to listen not dance. The music ends. The singers have been merely adequate all evening and the pianists, Gordon Boelzner and Jeananne Albee, have played this number too fast, but the dancers clap anyway. Their applause brings the curtain down. Our applause brought the house down night after night.

THE OZONE—not formaldehyde—that permeates the State Theater after a *Liebeslieder* should clear the air of muddled, self-serving notions about "the goal" of City Ballet. There is not one goal but two, and each is equally important. The company must maintain its reputation (earned by Balanchine) of being the most creative performing arts institution in the world by performing new works; and it must maintain Balanchine's ballets in a manner worthy of them. An artistic heritage, after all, provides instruction as well as pleasure. Judging from the "novelties" that have recently entered the repertory, Martins and Robbins have imperfectly understood the lesson about making more out of less.

Martins certainly had *Liebeslieder* in mind last season when he made *A Schubertiad*. It, too, was a piano-ballet social with a transformed second part; but Martins invited too many people and gave them only aridly clever things to do. At some performances a party-pooping orchestration of Schubert's two-piano "Fantasie" was used for the

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final section. A contrapuntal ensemble of wearisome complexity finished it off. Martins's latest, *Rejouissance*, set to the last two orchestral suites of Bach, may be considered a retreat into abstraction by those who thought *A Schubertiad* an advance instead of a debacle. I found *Rejouissance* underwhelming and overpopulated, often by dancers who haven't anything interesting to do with their arms; but at least it contained no major miscalculations of dramatic form or musical texture.

Robbins's recent novelties, for all their undeniably surefire professionalism, offer little that deserves to be looked at or listened to very often. His newest, *Brahms/Handel*, is an exercise in excess. For some reason, it required an extra choreographer (Twyla Tharp). Instead of using the original piano version of Brahms's *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*, it must have a raucous orchestration (by Edmund Rubbra) that sounds like Mahler gone rancid. Dancers, costumed in clashing blue and green (by Oscar de la Renta), rarely seem tranquil. If they aren't twitching when Tharp adds her Spencerian flourishes to classical lines, they are lifting or getting lifted in a manner that seemed to alarm the girls as much as it did me. When the *Fugue* bore down upon us, eyes and ears were mauled by the desperately garish complexity of it all.

In his interview with Kisselgoff, Robbins predicted that a new choreographer of merit will probably be a radical, as Balanchine was, someone who "has had enough with the way it was done and wants to say something else." City Ballet's repertory is fast filling up with works that should inspire such revolt. But if Balanchine masterpieces continue to be revived and danced as successfully as *Liebeslieder Walzer* (the long-lost *Gounod Symphony* returns this season), then our radical can see how a foundation of classical tradition can be as resilient as a trampoline for the daring.

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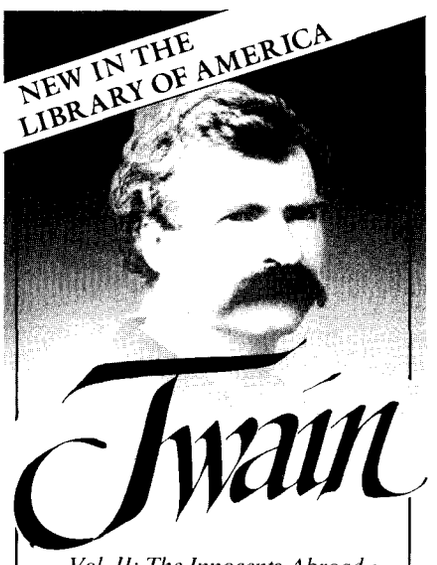
RAG TIME

Lives of the Poets: Six Stories and a Novella by E. L. Doctorow

(Random House, 145 pp., $14.95)

In *Lives of the Poets* E. L. Doctorow is squeaking open the cupboard doors of his imagination and saying, "Welcome to my clutter." Consisting of six stories and a novella, this collection is a showcase of personal debris, a shelf display of memories and mouse-hairs and glum, musing asides. Despite its classical title (Dr. Johnson, I presume?), *Lives of the Poets* is a slight, jittery book, a bulletin from the silk-stocking districts of the *Zeitgeist*, where the rents are high, the morale low. Doctorow's characters dine at Elio's, commute to Connecticut, make bright chat at art openings, seem to roll in money and lovers. And yet they're not happy; they're acrid and touchy and unfulfilled. (Pickle juice weeps from their pores.) And these "poets," far from being the unacknowledged legislators of mankind, have not the slightest jot of influence on the exercise of American power. They're chattily irrelevant. This graying of the affluent left might have made for a book inbred and forlorn, but *Lives of the Poets* is too diffuse to sustain a mood of cliquish funk. In its curlicues of urban disassociation, *Lives* doesn't even have the high-strung chic of *Sleepless Nights* or *Speedboat*. No, it's a loose-strung book, and it's out there on its own, sneezing in the dark. Yet it's not a *boldly* solitary work, either. It is rather precious about its sniffles. It wants to be babied.

E. L. Doctorow has stressed in interviews that his book is not a casual round-up. "Oddly enough, I don't think of this as a collection of stories," he told *Vogue*. "I think of it as a novel about a guy who has written six stories." The opening story, "The Writer in the Family," is a trim reminiscence about a loyal Jewish son who writes letters to his decrepit grandmother on the noodging of his Aunt Frances. When his loyalty to his dead father triumphs over his loyalty to Aunt Frances, Doctorow's narrator becomes a Philip Roth character, smart and rebellious, capable of sabotage. The story itself is like early Philip Roth, before he began spitting



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PHARAOH

So as not to be lonely
in the afterlife
the boy-king was buried
with his most cherished things

items he would need
on his journey
toys, enough food
for a lifetime, maybe more

a golden cage
on whose perch
his canary
still sings like a rusty hinge

his throne
his cup
a spoon or two
made of gold, solid gold

urns filled with oil
urns filled with honey
some broken dishes
plenty of wine

his gold mask
a perfect likeness
on which his highness
crayoned a faint mustache

his silk tunic
a supply of papyrus
an ivory comb
with no missing teeth

a mirror on which
to breathe a cloud—
the tomb's only weather
that, and dust

his dog
a golden ball
two old servants
curled at his feet

under the bandages
pharaoh, a boy
buried with his hands
in his pockets

a star-chart
carved on the ceiling
under which
a deep healing is taking place

JANE SHORE

fishhooks and dragon-fire, and its low-key poignance is pleasing. Unfortunately this curtain raiser is followed by a group of stories whose only character is a vague, creeping anxiety. I soon began to attach a name to this character: Nameless Dread.

NAMELESS Dread swims in "the yellowing rush of spumed currents" of "The Water Works," where a drowned child is exhumed. Nameless Dread puts a bitch in harness in "Willi," where the mating of dogs becomes a drama of brute will. (" 'Put it to her,' he shouted, 'come on, get it in there, give it to her' "—talk about performance anxiety.) Nameless Dread drives a school bus in "The Hunter" and haunts the countryside in "The Leather Man" and stocks the shelves with ceramic erotica in "The Foreign Legation." In these chronicles of Nameless Dread, Doctorow sets the scene with little razor nicks of observation, his boogeyman being a beast of a thousand cuts.

> He didn't trust himself to think about his children, but he could see what they were seeing.
>
> Drawn figures where only the mouths moved.
>
> A kind of computerized running.
>
> Very detailed sound explosions.

And this is simply a description of a father watching cartoons with his kiddies! But in Doctorow's fiction, Nameless Dread is the master programmer, broadcasting doom.

With the novella "Lives of the Poets" we abandon the world of the mod-Gothic and return to Philip Roth's Jewish-American precincts, where complaints are brewed with the morning coffee. Like Nathan Zuckerman in *The Anatomy Lesson*, Doctorow's Jonathan is a middle-aged writer in whom pain has taken up residence. "My left thumb is stiff. . . . I have a touch of pinched nerve in the neck. . . . I've got this painful stitch in the kidney." He's a sack of ailments in a floppy sweater, and everyone around him seems to be going under the knife or tottering out of the sick ward or preparing for dilapidation. "Brenda miraculously pulled through brain surgery a few years ago and told me when we met she could expect a severe palsy in old age. . . . If she lived that long." Between news updates on his own rusting hulk ("Migod, I have just found a little bump on the scrotum"—a false alarm, it turns out), Jonathan fills us in on his friends and their infidelities; interesting rides he's had on the subway; his roach problems; the messy demands of his mail; jury duty. Reading this tallying up of a writer's life, I thought of Tom Wolfe's satirical sketch "Mauve Gloves & Madmen, Clutter & Vine," in which an intellectual leftie literally tabulates his status by punching numbers into a calculator. Certainly Wolfe's hot media item and Doctorow's occupy the same starry arena. Chummy first names abound.

> . . . on those marvelous frog-and-cricket evenings up on the Vineyard he and Bill and Julie and Scott and Henry and Herman and Leon and Shelly and the rest, all Media & Lit. people from New York, have discussed why they send their children to private schools . . .
>
> (Wolfe)

> Every writer who's in town is there, Norman and Kurt, Joyce, Angel has driven down from Connecticut with Bill and Rose—Angel looking terrific, where'd she get that dress? Jonathan, she says, laughing, how nice to see you—I wave to Phil, there's Bernie, John, John A., Peter and Maria in from the Island . . .
>
> (Doctorow)

Island or Vineyard, it's all the same Mafia, but at least Wolfe is trying to give us an entertaining piece of pop anthropology—a send-up of tribal fetishism among the publishing elite. Doctorow is simply handing us the guest list and then telling us how awful the party is. For all the fun he has, Jonathan might as well have stayed home and tidied up his medicine chest.

BUT Jonathan, with his bumps and digressions, is meant to be more than a character sketch of a writer hitting a brick wall of menopause. Doctorow told *Vogue*, ". . . I think *Lives of the Poets* can make a fair claim not only to describing the state of this artist's mind, but also to making him representative of the artwork of our particular moment in literary history, American history." And since Jonathan is clearly an autobiographical stand-in for Doctorow (both went to Kenyon, etc.), *Lives of the Poets* is clearly a self-diagnosis meant to account for the malaise Doctorow sees around him—what he calls the "emotional exhaustion" of his circle. In other words, what ails E. L. Doctorow is what ails America. That's a pretty steep conceit, and although Doctorow loves to make lists ("fedora, homburg, Swiss Tirol, Irish

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tinker, deerhound, Russian lamb, baseball, tengallon, seaman watch, Greek fisher, garrison, pith or steel helmet, on me they're all dunce caps"), he's no Walt Whitman. America isn't yodeling through his lungs. But it is making muffled distress calls. "It is not that everyone I know is fucked up, incomplete, unrealized. On the whole we are all quite game. It's life itself that seems to be wanting." So shape up, life—shape up, America. You're letting Phil and Bernie down.

LIVES of the Poets is an act of vanity, but that in itself is not condemning. Imperial vanity can be a great drumming force in literature, whether it's Balzac bearing all of French society on his back, or Nabokov striding the clouds, hurling thunderbolts. The vanity of *Lives of the Poets*, however, is crabbed and pettish, like the book itself. Doctorow is crawling into his drab little box of solitude to make himself look sensitive and unbought.

> I'm fairly sure I can summon any one of a half-dozen women who on little or no notice will be delighted to spend the night with me. That's a modest estimate. They will get in their cars, fly in from other cities. Yet I call no one, I isolate myself, a man whose state of rest is inconsolability. I walk the streets feeling like a vagrant, I've got this stinging desolation in my eyes.

Celibate in sex, celibate in fame. "A call from my mother: I saw your friend Norman's name in the newspaper, I see him all the time on television, why don't I ever see you on television? I don't know, Mom, I value my privacy. Why, she says, what are you hiding?" (She sounds like Belker's mother on "Hill Street Blues," bugging him at the station house.) The crown of thorns to Jonathan's vanity comes when he agrees to shelter Salvadoran refugees—"definitely illegal," a lawyer assures him—and then apostrophizes, "Look, my country, what you've done to me, what I have to do to live with myself." (He sounds like the old man on David Letterman who, turning a watery eye to the camera, says, "I do and do and do for you kids—and this is the thanks I get!") Sex and politics and fame exist in *Lives of the Poets* only to certify its author's humble, monkish remove from their grubbier aspects. He marks his meek pride on his forehead with ashes.

He even offers an invocation. "Dear God," he begins,

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keep the blessings flowing, grant us all great good health and long life, with no illness, no sickness, no disease, no affliction of any kind, mental or physical. Spare us from all disasters, human or natural, and from all accidents, and spare us from violence, whether organized and official or spontaneous and haphazard. Let there be no breakdown or deterioration of any of our internal systems or organs [didn't we cover this already?], no loss of acuity of our senses, no diminution of abilities and capacities. Keep our reflexes sharp. Let us live in a world of peace and social justice. Let us breathe clean air and drink pure water. Let us live in love and joy and creativity, knowing courage and finding wisdom and having a shot at enlightenment. I think that about covers everything, except extend this terrific grant to everyone I know and whoever they may have affection for and so on, amen.

It's bad prose, it's bad prayer, and it doesn't really chime with the book's hostility toward women (who seem to be sapping men's vital essences) or its sullen solipsism. Jonathan seems more truthful when he asks for a secret holistic formula which will enable him to live a century and a half "give or take a decade" and have a cock that never fails. Presumably, women will then be crawling up the side of the building to reach Jonathan's window, hoping to catch a glimpse of his desolate sting.

WHAT'S happened to E. L. Doctorow since *Ragtime*? *Loon Lake*, his 1980 novel, seemed to me an unconvincing, showy pastiche, but at least it was reaching for something—it wasn't just sitting around staring at its toenails. Perhaps it's Doctorow's thinking that needs to be straightened out. Asked in *Vogue* about the role of the writer, Doctorow replied, "I think the writer's obligation is just to tell the truth, and that's the one commitment he can't betray without destroying himself." Really? Evading the truth may be what helps free the imagination. If fiction is about telling the truth, it's also about telling beautiful lies and making what-might-have-been seem more real than what was. Doctorow told rollicking lies in *Ragtime* and gnarled, powerful lies in *The Book of Daniel*, and those are the novels which have the full breath of imagined life. *Lives of the Poets*, intent on telling the unpolished truth, is garrulous and informal and disposable—a book of blab.

Doctorow himself might even concede this. "Incidentally," a poet writes Jonathan, "whatever happened to *Lives of the Poets*?" and Jonathan adds, "I've been promising it for a long time." So *Lives of the Poets* really is a novel about a man trying to write a novel called *Lives of the Poets*—and Doctorow seems to be saying that this facsimile art is what we deserve—*Lives of the Poets* is a counterfeit book for our counterfeit time. Under the circumstances, it's difficult to feel grateful.

Thanks for nothing.

JAMES WOLCOTT

James Wolcott is a contributing editor of *Texas Monthly* and *Vanity Fair*.

GOOD OLD ZHOU

Zhou Enlai: A Biography by Dick Wilson

(Viking, 349 pp., $17.95)

Following the death of Mao in 1976, twin posters of him and Hua Guofeng, his brief successor, could be found in almost every Chinese home. The homes of the highly educated, however, were more likely to hold solitary portraits of Zhou Enlai, who is revered and loved as the great defender of intellectuals and cultural traditions. If all the stories are to be believed, nearly every temple and museum that escaped Red Guard destruction did so through his personal intercession; nearly every professor, official, scientist, or artist who was not persecuted had his personal protection. For many he is the embodiment of the untarnished leader, rejecting privileges and gifts and devoting himself utterly to the service of the people. Thus he symbolizes the attainment of socialist ideals which have become increasingly elusive since the 1950s.

It was Zhou whose death in January 1976 sparked the April 5 Tiananmen Incident, that extraordinary demonstration against fascism, which occurred when ultraleftists refused to commemorate him on the traditional day for mourning the dead. Indeed, reverence for Zhou may today be one of the most politically safe expressions of "democracy" available to the Chinese people—democracy in the Chinese sense of the word, which often is the right to criticize authority. Because of the contrast between the life-style for which Zhou is known and that of many officials, the mere placing of a portrait in one's home implies dissatisfaction with the less upright, often uneducated middle and lower cadres who have jurisdiction over most work units. Thus the memory of Zhou may also play a role in the acceptance by educated Chinese of an often unresponsive system: it implies that higher standards have been, and may some day once again be, possible.

I have often wondered how much of the adoration so many have for Zhou is justified, and how much is an outgrowth of the Chinese feudal belief that if only those at the top could be informed of the suffering of those below, all wrongs could be rectified. Not all thoughtful Chinese hold Zhou in such high esteem. Some are critical of his support for Mao's launching of the Cultural Revolution, especially since at the time Mao's power within the party was weak. Many regret his failure to stand up to Mao as it became clear that the Cultural Revolution was growing into a catastrophe; they see him as slippery, lacking in convictions and courage. Still others, ex-activists for whom the Cultural Revolution was an attempt to overthrow a feudal system for a more liberal one, see Zhou's law-and-order influence as a suppression of China's democratic forces. Even the worshipers are mystified by how it was that Zhou, alone among the Communist pantheon, was able to live out his career without a fall from grace.

Dick Wilson, a conscientious London-based scholar who counts himself among Zhou's many Western admirers, illuminates this and many other questions in his carefully researched biography. Although Wilson's book does

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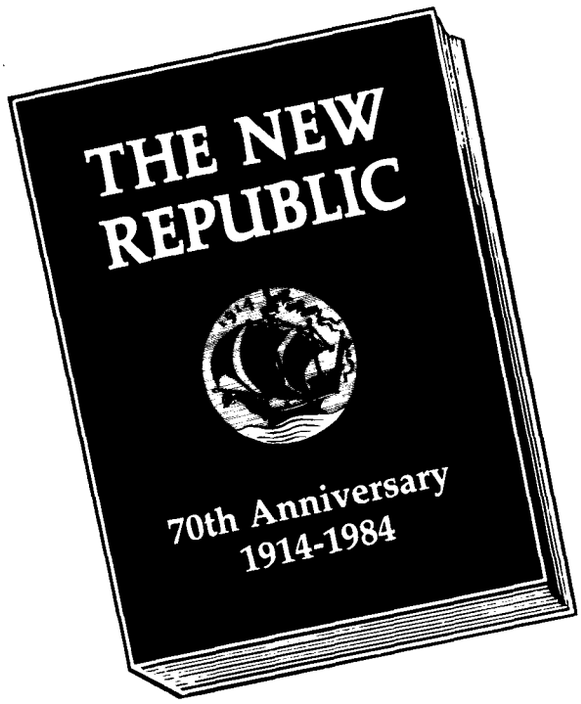
"Don't give up the ship."



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not have the flavor of those by the new breed of sinologists who have gained an intimate knowledge of contemporary China through extended residence there, it is the best life of Zhou now available. Rich in detail, it ranges from early party history and power struggles to international relations and contemporary political campaigns.

Wilson conveys a sense of lost opportunities for better U.S.-China relations. Zhou, for example, hoped to gain U.S. assistance for China's modernization from well before the revolution, and at one point in 1945 the chance interception of his unflattering telegram about U.S. Ambassador Hurley may have prevented a Zhou-Roosevelt meeting. Wilson also traces the peculiar variations of the ideological differences between Mao and Zhou; at times the two held positions opposite to those for which they are now famous, Zhou supporting an emphasis on class struggle, Mao favoring cooperation with rich peasants. Also fascinating is the portrait of Zhou as a skillful politician who made numerous diplomatic coups abroad while carefully rejecting the dangerous number two spot at home. He avoided clear position statements, occupied himself with detail and day-to-day administration, and held back his votes and support until it was clear which way the wind was blowing. (Zhou had no monopoly on many of these tactics: they are second nature even today to many ordinary Chinese concerned with self-preservation.) Wilson describes Zhou as at times so preoccupied with minor affairs that he could appear "a neurotic old nanny," with an old-maidish, or perhaps housewifely, manner.

WILSON'S Zhou suffered an insecure early childhood in a bourgeois merchant family from the Yangtse River delta, for he was passed from the care of father to uncle, and back again. As a youth, he was often seen as dainty and effeminate, and he was known for his female stage roles, which included a notable Nora in *A Doll's House*. Extremely bright, he became the only scholarship student at an excellent school in Tianjin. Early political activism brought him back from a stay in Japan to participate in the May Fourth Movement (he spent a year in jail), and also led to his repatriation to Guangzhou after a three-and-a-half-year organizing stint as one of the top Chinese Communists in France. He then became political commissar at Sun Yat-sen's Huangpu Military Academy, a position which prepared him for his position as political head of Kuomintang forces during the period of K.M.T.-Communist cooperation. After the Communists' 1927 Shanghai Uprising, however, Chiang Kai-shek placed an $80,000 price on his head, and Zhou's escape in disguise was one of the numerous extremely narrow ones of his career.

MANY OF what we now see as the saddest stories come from the period around the revolution, when Zhou worked hardest to unite various groups behind communism and draw talented people to the cause. He often used the language of democracy ("we must realize a government that is truly of the people, by the people, and for the people," he said in 1946), and he wrote "thousands of letters to non-Communist intellectuals and professional men pleading with them to work under the Communist government." Many trusted him, some returning from overseas in their belief that they could help their motherland. He helped form the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to provide a forum that would allow various groups to play a role in the new government. It is evident that his vision of new China was vastly different from the anti-democratic society it soon became under Mao.

Wilson understates the tragedy of what happened to many such people. He does not even mention the Anti-Rightist Movement by name, and seems to accept Zhou's evaluation of the Cultural Revolution as doing more good than harm. ("What we gained was far, far more than we lost.") He describes the great economist Ma Yinchu as dying "a disappointed man," without explaining that Ma died in prison for his suggestion that population control, rather than the rapid expansion Mao was calling for, was essential. Such omissions keep the book from being a definitive life of Zhou. So does Wilson's occasional romanticism, as when he writes of the Zhou-Deng Yingchao marriage: "In marrying each other they married the Chinese Revolution, with all its exacting demands, and their only children would be that next generation of China . . . whose frontiers of freedom and dignity would be appreciably enlarged by their sacrifice." Such passages may reflect the influence of such sources as Anna Louise Strong, Han Suyin, and Edgar Snow.

Much of the story of Zhou after the revolution is one of international diplomatic successes. Still, all of Zhou's charm and finesse was not adequate to the demands of the Cultural Revolution. Wilson sees Zhou as "pretending to support the movement, while endeavoring to deflect its excesses, blunt its mischief and staunch the wounds it was inflicting," a better alternative than uselessly sacrificing himself by voicing opposition. Amid the anarchy, power struggles, and crusades, he "ran the normal affairs of government insofar as he could with a skeleton staff, handling everything from the daily supply of oil, rice and firewood to the programme for man-made satellites." He also kept his personal car on hand to rescue certain Red Guard victims, once even requisitioning a helicopter for the purpose.

Despite Zhou's efforts, however, China experienced an inestimable disaster, one which came close to making Zhou himself one of its victims. Wilson describes how he came under attack by ultraleftists in the so-called "516 Conspiracy," and in August 1967 was even forcibly detained in his office for two and a half days. Zhou's adopted daughter Sun Weishi died under Red Guard torture (probably at the instigation of Jiang Qing, Mao's wife). He saw numerous old friends and associates fall as well. Nevertheless, he was able to declare a few years later, "such a revolution must be conducted again and again, each time to a more advanced stage and each going deeper than the one before."

THIS raises one of the great unresolved questions about the career of Zhou Enlai. Did he speak this way because he was obliged to, or was he sincere? Can we reconcile the image of Zhou as great moderator with his support for the Cultural Revolution and other repressive policies? He is commonly respected as having made a great contribution to humanity, but many of those who followed and trusted him were ultimately betrayed. As Wilson puts it, "He personified the old-world Chinese virtues of gentleness, politeness and humility, yet put them to work for a political ideology that invoked violence and destruction as a

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necessary part of its programme." We can only guess how he really felt about the Cultural Revolution, and the anguish he may have experienced in his later years. The tragedy of Zhou Enlai is that he seems to have believed so strongly that his cause could embrace the best and brightest and with their help save China. But all too often it devoured them.

JUDITH SHAPIRO

Judith Shapiro is co-author with Liang Heng of *Son of the Revolution* (Vintage) and of *Intellectual Freedom in China After Mao* (a Fund for Free Expression Report).

THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED

Invented Lives: F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald by James R. Mellow

(Houghton Mifflin, 569 pp., $22.50)

A dozen biographies have been written about F. Scott Fitzgerald and his nuanced novels of the "jazz age"—about his marriage to Zelda Sayre, a southern belle; about their social and media success of the time; about their pathetic decline and fall, he into drunkenness and desuetude and she into insanity. Theirs was a kind of old-fashioned tragedy, without the true tragic passion or meaning. Zelda was no Ophelia, nor was Scott a Hamlet. Their fall was not from grandeur and hubris but from glamour and notoriety, a collapse from the gauzy dreamland of the early moving pictures, the era of the flapper and the Charleston, the blare and brass of the fabled '20s. The Fitzgerald history is a kind of soap opera—but with surprising intensities and a very unhappy ending.

Still, soap operas have a human fascination; they deal in emotions, however maudlin. The ambiguity and the mystery of the Fitzgeralds' lives continue to attract writers—from the sensation-mongering of *Beloved Infidel* to the monotonous fact-stuffed hero-worship of *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur*, whose titles themselves are revelatory. And lately feminists have attempted to turn mad Zelda into the helpless victim of her husband. What strikes me forcefully in surveying the past productions is that the Fitzgerald biographers were face to face with psychological data—insanity, alcoholism, self-exhibition, "transference" and symbiosis, behavior of the wildest sort—yet most of them turned away from interpreting their material. They simply piled on relevant and irrelevant facts. In doing this they averted their eyes from the twentieth-century province of learning which asks us to understand psychological signs and actions.

The Fitzgeralds were constant role-players in a play they were always writing. They lived out their extravagant fantasies. The only reality they had to take account of was Scott's writing, and mainly because it furnished that other reality, the money they needed for their wayward style of life, a style that implied that one could do anything one pleased. (One of its more benign manifestations was their jumping into public fountains, or giving madcap parties which have been fully described in many volumes of memoirs.) Fitzgerald himself had an enormous talent: it lay particularly in his ability to capture in words his understanding of emotions just below the surface of being. Consider the extraordinary way Scott read and used the evidence of Zelda's illness in *Tender is the Night*; I am not aware that any of the later biographers truly tried to grasp it, or read it with the same acuity.

Zelda's madness was deep-rooted and pathological. Scott's problems were nearer the surface and derived from his general softness and weakness, that of a badly reared child denied any sense of self. Small wonder that he imitated and even plagiarized others in his search for solid ground within his personal quicksand. In *Tender is the Night* he writes of his hero, "it was as if for the remainder of his life he was condemned to carry with him the egos of certain people, early met and early loved, and to be only as complete as they were complete themselves." When someone feels as inadequate as this, and as worthless, he becomes an inveterate imitator and borrower from other's lives. It was Scott's misfortune that he borrowed from his mad wife.

James R. Mellow's retelling of the Fitzgerald lives focuses on their marriage, a fertile source of information. He reads his evidence closely and in proper biographical fashion disengages the patterns. Scott and Zelda, he finds, lived "invented lives." They were "masters of invention . . . creating new versions of themselves, putting themselves into their stories, and acting out their stories in real life." He compares them to "figures in a hall of mirrors, everything reflected back, brilliant or attractive or distorted images of themselves, but it was difficult to know where the real substance was." Still, he has succeeded in showing the consistency of their fantasy lives, and the ways in which they scrambled folly and fancy in their constant self-exhibition.

I WONDER whether he is aware of the psychological support for his hypothesis. I find no reference in his book to what is familiarly called the *folie à deux*—"the craziness of two"—as defined in psychopathology, a delusion or delusional system shared by two individuals, usually married couples. The clinical data for this kind of double madness has been fully described and the French phrase long ago entered common parlance. Reading Mellow's narrative gave me a feeling I was watching a conscientious explorer entering what he believed was new territory and finding the flag planted by those who had come before. Still, his insight into this particular case history is valid. Had he done more psychological homework, he would have had a fine conceptual framework for sorting out the relevant and the irrelevant from the vast and contradictory data—he would have found the "real substance" he sought.

If this might be judged an error of omission, we can find also an error of commission which Mellow shares with his predecessors. I remember reading Nancy Milford's *Zelda* and being struck by the way in which she treated her subject as if she were wholly rational—while constantly offering evidence that she wasn't. Milford implied that Zelda was driven into madness by her life-situation, and her story read as if Scott was responsible. But it seems clear that madness was present in Zelda from the first, in spite of her moments of brilliance and lucidity. This happens in

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schizophrenia. Zelda also had an ability to verbalize the strange feelings that accompanied the shattering of her controls, so that some of her friends were fascinated by her oddity and "originality." Edmund Wilson's journals show him attracted by her way of putting things at the same time as he was struck by her strange behavior. John Dos Passos, on the other hand, once went to an amusement park with Zelda and, seeing her up close, proclaimed "this woman is mad"; she has "a basic fissure in her mental process." (I find it difficult to understand why Mellow seeks to soften this insight by remarking that Dos Passos found "an edge of madness" in the woman.) One can understand, however, the wishful thinking of her biographers. It is not easy to look at a beautiful woman and reconcile her vitality and her energy with mental failure.

But her actions and the testimony of other witnesses cannot be dismissed. Rebecca West, for example, found her "frightening" and "spooky." One might indeed be frightened by a woman who acted on impulse. When young, she climbed high rooftops and summoned the fire wagons to rescue her; in France, trying to make sure of a slow elevator in a French hotel, she tied it to her floor and created an uproar; she threw items of her jewelry out of train windows. The records are filled with instances of her curious deviations. The primal stuff kept breaking through her social façade. Yet Mellow reproaches her—as if she had all her marbles—for not offering "real encouragement" to her husband and regrets her "selfishness and boredom" which held him "hostage." The fundamental truth about a *folie à deux* is that both husband and wife hold one another hostage.

Scott Fitzgerald, being weak, went along with her follies, as he made himself a part of her delusionary system. Later, when she was in the hands of the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler, who first used the word schizophrenia, and of the psychotherapists August Forel and Adolf Meyer, he clearly grasped what had happened. In *Tender is the Night* he puts the question "what's crazy and what's eccentric?" How can one tell the difference? And the answer he finds for the Zelda persona is that she is "a permanent eccentric." Yet strangely enough—so deep was his sense of his own worthlessness—he allows the Zelda character in the novel to be cured, while his own persona sinks into the drunkenness and the ineptitude of his own experience. And this in spite of his seeing clearly the "versatility of madness . . . akin to the resourcefulness of water seeping through a dike."

Invented Lives, whatever its shortcomings, is a consistently readable and well-constructed biography. As he demonstrated in his biography of Gertrude Stein, Mellow believes in giving a shape and form to the lives he writes; he has an artistic goal. This book will serve as a corrective to much nonsense that has been written in the sentimentalizing of the Fitzgerald experience. The lesson for life-writers implicit in the book is—as I have often argued—that modern biography can no longer escape modern psychology. Biographers must train themselves and inform themselves about everyday psychopathology, and try to understand human ways of thinking, dreaming, imagining.

LEON EDEL

Leon Edel's newest book, just published, is *Writing Lives: Principia Biographica* (Norton).

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THE SCHOOLS AND UNCLE SAM

Public Dollars for Private Schools: The Case of Tuition Tax Credits
edited by Thomas James and Henry M. Levin

(Temple University Press, 285 pp., $29.95)

On the surface, the issue of tuition tax credits is not complicated. There are the defenders of the public schools, who fear that the egalitarian mission of public education will be jeopardized if states or the federal government permit tax deductions for private school tuition. And there are the champions of nonpublic education, who contend that public policy should use tax incentives to encourage choice, pluralism, and diversity in schooling. Tax credits will foster competition and excellence, say the nonpublic school advocates. Tax credits will destroy the public schools, reply the public school partisans. The lines are drawn, and the battleground is the common school, that distinctively American institution.

Yet political controversies are rarely

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as simple as they seem, and this is no exception. Each side clings to its own mythology. Public school advocates pledge to defend to the end a high and impregnable wall between church and state, but that wall has historically been of uneven height and has frequently been breached. Defenders of private and parochial schools propose tax credits on grounds of equity, but such credits would be inequitably distributed.

FEW ISSUES have been as torturous for our political system as trying to define the appropriate relation between the state and nonpublic schools, especially sectarian schools. There were private schools long before there were public schools, and the line between public and private was not always so clear as it seems today. In the nineteenth century many states allocated public land and funds to private academies, including those with denominational sponsors. Church schools in New York City in the first quarter of the nineteenth century shared proportionately in state funds for schooling, in recognition of their public function. During the balance of the nineteenth century, the religious issue provoked numerous disputes, including an unsuccessful campaign in the 1870s to pass a constitutional amendment barring public support for religious schools. In the 1920s, war-inspired xenophobia promoted attacks on religious schools, which turned to the courts for protection. The Supreme Court invalidated an Oregon law requiring all children to attend public schools (*Pierce* v. *Society of Sisters*, 1925).

The *Pierce* decision has been called the Magna Carta of private education in the United States. The Court declared that the state had unreasonably interfered

> with the liberty of parents and guardians to direct the upbringing and education of children under their control. . . . The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments in this Union repose excludes any general power of the State to standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only. The child is not the mere creature of the State. . . .

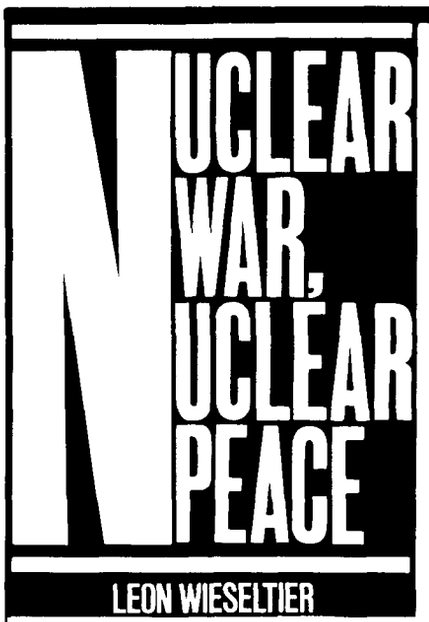
Less often noted is that the decision also affirmed the state's right to regulate nonpublic schools,

> to inspect, supervise and examine them, their teachers and pupils; to require that all children of proper age attend some school, that teachers shall be of good moral character and patriotic disposition, that certain studies plainly essential to good citizenship must be taught, and that nothing be taught which is manifestly inimical to the public welfare.

If the message of the *Pierce* case was straightforward—private schools have a right to exist, and the state has a right to impose reasonable regulations—the line of Supreme Court decisions since the 1940s about the relation between the state and religious schooling is anything but clear. The Court approved the use of public funds for transportation of children to parochial schools, disapproved released time for religious instruction (in public school buildings) in Illinois, approved released time for religious instruction (out of public school buildings) in New York, disapproved prayer in the public schools, and approved the provision of secular textbooks to nonpublic schools. The treatment of tuition tax credits by the high court has been similarly inconsistent. In 1973, the Supreme Court overturned a New York law which provided tax benefits to nonpublic school parents, but in 1983 endorsed a Minnesota statute which provides tax deductions for educational expenses of all state taxpayers.

This 1983 decision by the Court renewed discussion of a federal program of tuition tax credits. Since 1978, its major proponents in Congress have been Senators Bob Packwood (Republican of Oregon) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Democrat of New York). Initially their legislation passed the House, but failed in the Senate; on another occasion it passed both houses, but in forms so different that no legislation resulted. While President Jimmy Carter opposed tuition tax credits, the Reagan Administration took up the cause as its own. Yet even with a sympathetic President, a potentially sympathetic Supreme Court, and strong supporters in the House and the Senate, the prospect for tuition tax credits continues to be doubtful. After the whole of the first Reagan Administration, such legislation has received no more than warm rhetoric and a long waltz through the legislative process.

Public Dollars for Private Schools: The Case of Tuition Tax Credits is a timely reminder of how difficult and complex the issue is, and how unsatisfactory the public debate about it has been. The ideological arguments on both sides—in this case, really only one side, since Nathan Glazer stands alone among the



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—McGeorge Bundy
Front-page, *The New York Times Book Review*

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thirteen contributors in favoring tuition tax credits—look weak on paper. It is the practical arguments that are more illuminating, suggesting grounds for rather different hopes and fears than are usually heard on both sides of the subject.

The least persuasive of the cases made against tax credits consists of a defense of the common school today. Several contributors assert that tuition tax credits must be rejected because they would subvert the public school; that the public school must be defended because it promotes political socialization, social solidarity, egalitarianism, and civic virtue; that choice is synonymous with inequality and is therefore reprehensible; that equal opportunity requires a similar curriculum for all children, available only in the public schools; and that erosion of the public school would advance inequality of opportunity and of resources.

If these assertions were true, they would amount to a powerful argument for the public school. They are claims based on ideology, however, not on evidence. There are no signs, for example, that students in nonpublic schools are less committed to democratic ideals or less likely to be good citizens than students in public schools. No one has looked at military enlistment rates or voter registration or any other measure of civic engagement to compare the consequences of these different kinds of schooling. Nor do any of the essayists acknowledge the substantial inequalities among public schools. The schools of wealthy suburbs are more akin to private nonsectarian schools than they are to the public schools in the central city. To pretend that all public schools have equal resources or that they offer the same curriculum—neither of which is true—does not advance the cause of the public school.

Equally obscure is the issue of "choice." Opponents of tuition tax credits denigrate choice as an undemocratic value, as a value inconsistent with equality. But most Americans do not see a necessary conflict between those values. Most people think that their right to choose among candidates, their right to choose where to live, their right to choose between public and nonpublic schools---that these rights are as important as the national commitment to equal opportunity. Furthermore, insisting that the public school stands for equality while the private school stands for choice neatly ignores the millions of people who choose to leave the cities and to place their children in well-to-do suburban public schools. (Recognizing that choice has a measure of legitimacy, one of the editors, Henry M. Levin, an educational economist at Stanford, recommends the various public school choices that have evolved—like magnet schools, schools with parental involvement, mini-schools within large schools, or open enrollment within a school district.)

THE BOOK'S sole proponent of tuition tax credits, Nathan Glazer, asserts what is now a heretical view in the education world: "that some degree of homogeneity is necessary for effective education to take place." But it is neither racial nor economic homogeneity that he has in mind. By homogeneity he means "some degree of agreement on values among students themselves and among students, parents, and teachers." Without this agreement, too much time is wasted on discipline instead of being spent on education. Glazer predicts that tuition tax credits would have little effect on families who are pleased with the public schools, but would probably spur a modest withdrawal by both blacks and whites in the cities seeking better schooling.

But the best case against tuition tax credits is made by David W. Breneman, an economist who is president of Kalamazoo College. It is based on evidence, not ideology. Judging from his economic analysis of the potential effects of the credits, he doubts that they would generate many shifts from public to private schools; the amount of saving would be too little to affect low-income families and not enough to affect most other families. Instead of spurring choice, then, he contends that the credits will be "pure windfall gains to those with children already enrolled in private schools, a high price to pay for the relatively few families whose decision might be affected." So much for the worries on the part of tax credit opponents about flight from the public schools, as well as for proponents' hopes for expanded choice.

One interesting suggestion in Breneman's essay is that efforts to promote educational choice should be modeled on the need-based grant programs in higher education. He mentions this in passing, and the idea is not pursued elsewhere. This is too bad, because it is an intriguing suggestion. The federal government and many states make grants and loans to low-income students for higher education, regardless of whether they attend public schools or private institutions; it is difficult to see why this approach is appropriate for higher education, but not for lower. In the late 1970s, Senator Moynihan proposed "baby BEOGs," that is, grants for low-income school children for use in public or private schools, following the example of the popular Basic Educational Opportunity Grants for needy college students. The idea fell flat because it didn't satisfy proponents of tax credits for *all* parents, nor did it placate opponents of any form of aid to private schools.

IT MAY be that in the years ahead some program to aid parents of private school students will succeed. Breneman and Glazer, though they stand on opposite sides of the tuition tax credit debate, agree that tax credits would not substantially change public school enrollment, since only those who are at the margins would shift their children from public to private schools. Of course there would be other consequences, and these are worth considering. Leaving aside the question of cost to the public treasury, the most significant effect is likely to be on the private schools themselves. When they become recipients of major government funding, the level of government regulation seems likely to increase. This raises troublesome problems for the private schools. Once they are subject to the same regulations as public schools, will they lose the qualities that make them special?

Dennis J. Encarnation of the Harvard Business School demonstrates in his essay that the extent of government aid to nonpublic schools and of government regulation is greater than most people realize. Nonpublic schools benefit by their tax-exempt status, eliminating their liability for local property taxes, and they receive tax-deductible contributions. In addition they receive direct payments from federal, state, and local programs, which subsidize such services as pupil transportation, special education for the handicapped, secular textbooks, health and welfare programs. Encarnation contends that 26 percent of the revenues of nonpublic schools comes from direct and indirect

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government aid.

No private school is entirely beyond government regulation. All fifty states require private elementary schools to register with the state and to supply regular reports. Five states require nonpublic schools to meet state accreditation standards; thirteen states require all teachers to have state certification; forty-six states require nonpublic schools to offer a curriculum "equivalent" to the public school curriculum. Encarnation predicts that the adoption of tuition tax credits would undoubtedly increase the scope of direct government regulation of private schools.

This, I believe, is the real specter of tuition tax credits: not the destruction of the public schools, but the absorption of private schools into the public sector. Tax credits seem likely to stimulate much greater government regulation of student admissions, teacher certification, curriculum standards, and disciplinary practices. If this occurs, then the very practices and policies that make private schools distinctive will be eliminated.

ADVOCATES of tuition tax credits disparage this prospect by pointing out that nonpublic schools, colleges, and universities also receive extensive government subsidy, without having been unduly burdened by government regulation. The analogy between precollegiate schooling and higher education may not be appropriate, however, since government has traditionally eschewed involvement in student admissions, faculty hiring, or curriculum standards in higher education. Tuition tax credits have gained support in recent years because of the expectation that they will not unleash higher levels of government regulation, since the financial benefits will go to parents rather than to institutions.

But the validity of this argument may have been undermined by the Supreme Court's Grove City College decision earlier this year. In a little noticed but significant section of the decision, the high court ruled unanimously that federal loans to the college's students represented aid to the college itself, even though the college scrupulously refused any direct loans, grants, or contracts from the federal government. Based on this precedent, federal and state courts might eventually decide that tuition tax credits—no less than student loans—benefit the institutions and make them recipients of public assistance. If this occurs, there might even come a time when the courts determine that the schools receiving these public benefits must banish religion from their curriculum, which would be a bitter irony for the Catholic schools which hope to be rescued from rising costs by tuition tax credits. This prediction, of course, could be wrong; but the risk remains.

During the past century, public schools replaced private schools as the dominant educational institution. Private schools survived as an alternative, for those who wanted something better (in their own eyes) or something different from the public schools. Whether they are religious or secular, they are freely chosen by parents, often at great cost to themselves. They are usually communities of the like-minded, who share values, either religious, academic, social, or political. Some are free-wheeling in their progressivism; some are bastions of academic traditionalism; some look remarkably like the local public school, except for their religious practices. To the extent that they are genuinely different from the public schools, they represent a source of diversity and pluralism in American education. It would be a shame to see these distinctive qualities sacrificed in exchange for the financial relief promised by tuition tax credits.

DIANE RAVITCH

Diane Ravitch is adjunct professor of history and education at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her most recent book is *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980* (Basic Books).

BRIEF REVIEW

Bright Lights, Big City by Jay McInerney

(Vintage Books, 182 pp., $5.95 paper)

Jay McInerney's first novel tells the story of a dizzying series of crises in the dissolute life of a young man in Manhattan. As his joyless, hedonistic life disintegrates, the young man confronts, and tries to escape, his mortality and the demands of his conscience. He loses his wife; his career falls apart; his hopes for artistic triumph expire; he does far too much cocaine and some pretty disgusting things because of it. In the end, an honest understanding of his despair begins to dawn on him, and seems to offer the possibility of grace in his broken life.

But *Bright Lights, Big City* is more than a young urban animal's encounter with self-awareness; this is no New Wave *Up From Narcissism*. It is a very funny, oddly touching book, and something of a tour de force as well. McInerney employs an unusual and challenging narrative device; he tells his tale through the second person in the historical present tense and fashions a coherent and engaging voice with it, one that is totally believable at almost every moment in the novel. Finally, the story has elements of a roman à clef about life at *The New Yorker*, which, though it is never actually named, serves as the protagonist's employer and as the target for some memorable episodes of sarcastic reverie.

In nightclubs, in the magazine's offices, in flashbacks to scenes of his broken marriage and forgotten family, McInerney's antihero pursues dreams of a better life that are frustrated by his own petty weaknesses. He wishes for success as a writer, but cannot summon the conviction or abandon his posturing long enough to make a real start. He yearns for a quiet life with a sympathetic woman, but settles instead for "the sexual equivalent of fast food," and fails to find even that. He hopes for a career that will make his family proud, but flees from his own brother come to help him. McInerney draws this bitter, self-indulgent young man with wit and sympathy, and his escapades, though they mark a near-suicidal auto-da-fé, are more diverting than depressing.

McInerney achieves this paradoxical effect by his deft handling of the narrative voice, by employing a fine eye for detail and an almost too precious ear for dialogue, and by infusing most scenes with his own slightly misdirected charm. The narration works best when the second-person technique gently opens the text to other voices, and when McInerney's stylistic fireworks are held just slightly at bay, as in this scene in which the protagonist encounters the one woman who seems, as she tells him of her childhood in Marblehead, to offer him hope:

> What she tells you is enhanced by the increasing animation of her gestures and facial expressions and becomes a vivid image of this childhood Arcadia. You notice

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for the first time that she has freckles. You didn't know they still made them. You imagine her as a child carrying a bucket of sand down to the beach. You see yourself watching from the bluff, through a time warp, saying: *Someday I will meet this girl.* You want to watch over her through the interval, protect her from the cruelty of schoolchildren and the careless lust of young men. The irrevocable past tense of the narration suggests to you some intervening tragedy. You suspect a snake in the vegetable garden.

But this fine touch fails McInerney at times, especially as he traces the bewildering history of the protagonist's broken marriage. When Amanda, the young man's slinky, vacuous wife, surfaces in the narration, McInerney can't seem to decide whether to treat her satirically or with a bittersweet longing. She is at once the ingenuous incarnation of the protagonist's own tarred innocence (his memory of her is linked with the smell of fresh bread, her hair is the color of wheat) and a dumb, lower-class, midwestern hick who is hopelessly out of place in his literate, coastal life (she marries a "Dial-a-Hunk" after their divorce). In the end she serves merely as a flat narrative device—alternately a reflection of the young man's lost wholesomeness, or of his witty sophistication, or of his wounded romanticism.

Aside from Amanda's elusive identity, McInerney also falls short of conveying one other crucial scene in the novel: the death of the protagonist's mother. This could be a problem of tone; the snappy second-person narration, which serves so well as a vehicle for the fleeting moments of hope in the novel, or its passages of cynicism and satire, may not be suited to the deeper waters of family bonds broken by death or desertion.

But beyond these shortcomings, *Bright Lights, Big City* is an accomplished and funny novel, full of clever verbal contraptions and hip social pastiches. It is a topical satire, an antic running commentary on young urban life careening out of control, but it is also more than that. For it embraces enough of the true comic spirit, through the quiet redemption of its main character, to reach deeper than dashing social reportage. McInerney not only jests at our slightly tawdry life, but also celebrates its abiding possibilities.

TERENCE MORAN

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Slavery and Human Progress by David Brion Davis (Oxford University Press). A meditation on the morals and methods of studying slavery. (Reviewed 11/26/84)

Secrets and Other Stories by Bernard MacLaverty (Viking). Scenes from Irish life. (11/26/84)

1982 Janine by Alasdair Gray (Viking). The desperate, diverting confessions of a sexually obsessed Scotchman. (11/12/84)

The Fateful Alliance: France, Russia, and the Coming of the First World War by George Kennan (Pantheon). A grim scholarly study of political and military shortsightedness. (11/5/84)

Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control by Strobe Talbott (Knopf). A masterful account of arms control policymaking since 1981. (10/15/84)

Season of Spoils: The Story of the Reagan Administration's Attack on the Environment by Jonathan Lash, with Katherine Gillman and David Sheridan (Pantheon). A timely and persuasive account of a ruinous record. (10/1/84)

The New Politics of Inequality by Thomas Byrne Edsall (Norton). A brilliant analysis of class, ideology, and money in politics. (10/29/84)

Solzhenitsyn: A Biography by Michael Scammell (Norton). A bold, balanced portrait of the man some hail as prophet, others denounce as fanatic. (10/15/84)

The War of the End of the World: by Mario Vargas Llosa (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). An apocalyptic vision from Peru's most important novelist. (10/8/84)

The Nature of the Child by Jerome Kagan (Basic). A challenging look at the family and its influence. (11/5/84)

TRB, *from page 4*

Jews hold no special brief for homosexuality and abortion. They have no anointed responsibility for blacks and the poor. But at barely 2 percent of the population and shrinking, with a history of victimization by prejudice, smart Jews know they are not likely to thrive in a society where power relationships are all that matter. Just as you can't let America abandon its commitments to the rest of the world and still expect it to defend Israel (a favorite neoconservative point), you can't allow intolerance of other nonconforming groups to flower in American society and expect tolerance of Jews to survive.

It's a similar mystery to me why some American Jews should want our country to adopt a purely pragmatic, interests-over-values approach to the world at large. Sure, a case can be made for Israel as a vital link in America's self-defense. But that case is complicated. What isn't complicated is the case for Israel as a unique exemplar of the American values of democracy and freedom in a region dominated by tyrannies of various sorts. Any Jew who's discussed the subject with gentiles knows that this is the real wellspring of American support for Israel.

And what about Soviet Jews? They are no more than a side issue in the superpower conflict. America's interests are not engaged. Once again, just as you can't reasonably ask for a defense policy just strong enough to protect Israel, you can't ask for a human rights policy just strong enough to help Soviet Jews.

Would-be Republican Jewish power brokers are bitterly disappointed that 1984 was not the breakthrough year. They argue, unconvincingly, that the pollsters are wrong and that close to half the Jewish vote went for Reagan after all. Naturally they're upset. A fine Moses you make if you can't deliver your people. And what was that we kept hearing about liberal Jews being out of touch?

In the continuing war among Jewish intellectuals, neoconservatives reasonably object to being dismissed as lacking "compassion," as if that were the end of the argument. It's time they stopped brandishing accusations of naïveté with the same definitive flourish. Most American Jews, it turns out, still see their values and their interests as one and the same.

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NEW HAVEN DIARIST

Strike

I HAVE HEARD that Yale University is badly divided by a seven-week-old strike of clerical and technical workers, but walking around campus on a Saturday morning, I see little sign of bitterness. It is perfect football weather, and for every poster and button expressing an opinion about the strike, two or three more express one (usually violent and occasionally obscene) about the Princeton football team. Later in the day, Yale beats Princeton 27 to 24 with a dramatic last-second touchdown, and the streets swarm with screaming undergraduates and bemused, overweight alumni. Everything seems normal.

HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE is normal this fall at Yale. On September 26, 1,800 members of Local 34 of the Federation of University Employees walked off their jobs in one of the first major strikes based on the idea of comparable worth. Eighty-two percent of the strikers are women, many of them secretaries. They claim that their work is "comparable" in terms of skills and experience to that done by, say, Yale's predominantly male truck drivers; but the truck drivers earn an average of $18,000 a year, the striking workers only $13,000. The strike has badly disrupted the functioning of university offices, and a sympathy strike by dining hall workers has closed eating facilities for everyone but freshmen, so that the university now pays undergraduates a $72.80 rebate every week for food. To avoid picket lines, hundreds of classes now meet off campus. "You feel like it's the flying university," says one friend whose apartment is now a French classroom five mornings a week and an occasional meeting place for the Department of Comparative Literature. But art and film classes, which require special facilities and technical help, have been paralyzed. The strike has also spawned a $14 million class action suit by 102 students against the university; two mass sit-ins resulting in over 630 arrests; and a student "moratorium" this week asking both sides to moderate their demands. (As always, the anti-war movement of the 1960s remains the model for student activism: the main pro-union student group is called S.N.S.—Students for a Negotiated Settlement.)

COMPARABLE WORTH is a rather new, abstract idea, so it is perhaps fitting that its first real test is coming in a university setting. But universities are a particularly tricky place to apply a theory whose proponents have devised sophisticated methods of determining the comparative worth of different occupations. At Yale, the truck drivers who make more money than the clerical workers also earn almost as much as many assistant professors. But advocates of comparable worth are generally interested in affirmative action for women, not in pay scales per se, and they see Yale as an ideal place to draw attention to the issue. Thomas Keenan, a leader of S.N.S., says, "There are all sorts of strategies for addressing national problems. There is starting at the top with legislation, and there is starting at the bottom with examples." On the other side, the administration argues that a university is not the proper place to set an example. Provost William Brainard has called the clerical workers' low salaries "a national problem which Yale can't be expected to solve." My friend Thomas Pepper, a first-year graduate student who was arrested in one of the sit-ins, disagrees. "What is a university," he asks, "if not a crystallization of the ideals of the community?"

DESPITE THIS GENERALLY high-minded debate, the strike has hardly remained on a philosophical plane. One low point came when somebody—no one knows who—broke into the Law School library, dumped thirty-four card catalogue drawers out onto the floor, and spray-painted "Support Local 34" on the walls. Pickets have also disrupted on-campus classes by sounding car horns outside classrooms. Anti-union sentiment has grown ugly too. "Nuke Local 34" license plates can be seen on the front bumpers of cars around campus, and students shout obscenities at pro-strike classmates on the picket lines. The university has also suffered from the fact that the campus is now regarded as off limits by a large proportion of the faculty and student body. Freshmen have no place to meet each other; nor do graduate students and junior faculty, for whom the department is often the only place to socialize.

THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY is also suffering from a stubborn case of over-politicization. Elaine Pofeldt, a freshman, came to Yale this fall only to find that "everything you do here is a political decision." Indeed, since the university medical center is heavily picketed, even getting sick can lead to political agonizing. Many students feel that they have no role in a dispute between union and management, and resent the political atmosphere. "It's not my responsibility to do anything," Nina Ebel, a junior, tells me. "It's Yale's responsibility and Local 34's responsibility. I don't like the idea of this being dumped in my lap, and I don't think I'm shirking my duty to society if I cross a picket line and get on with my life."

ON AN ACTIVE CAMPUS like Yale, picketing is an endless job. Friday night the lines appeared outside a hall where the Glee Club was singing. Tonight strikers and student sympathizers march down Chapel Street in front of the Yale Repertory Theater. It's enough to make anyone sick and tired of it all—especially the clerical and technical workers who must live on $50 a week strike pay. However, persistent union militancy has paid off at Yale before (notably in the case of the $18,000-a-year truck drivers), and so Local 34 is unlikely to give in easily. Yet the introduction of comparable worth into a simple contract dispute puts pressure on the administration not to give in either. If the final settlement is perceived as a union victory, there could be nationwide repercussions. And rumor has it that the other Ivy League presidents are urging Yale President Giamatti not to budge. Nonetheless, at this writing, negotiations are underway again. Perhaps this time union and university officials alike will agree that Yale's hard lesson in real-world politics has lasted long enough.

D.A.B.

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